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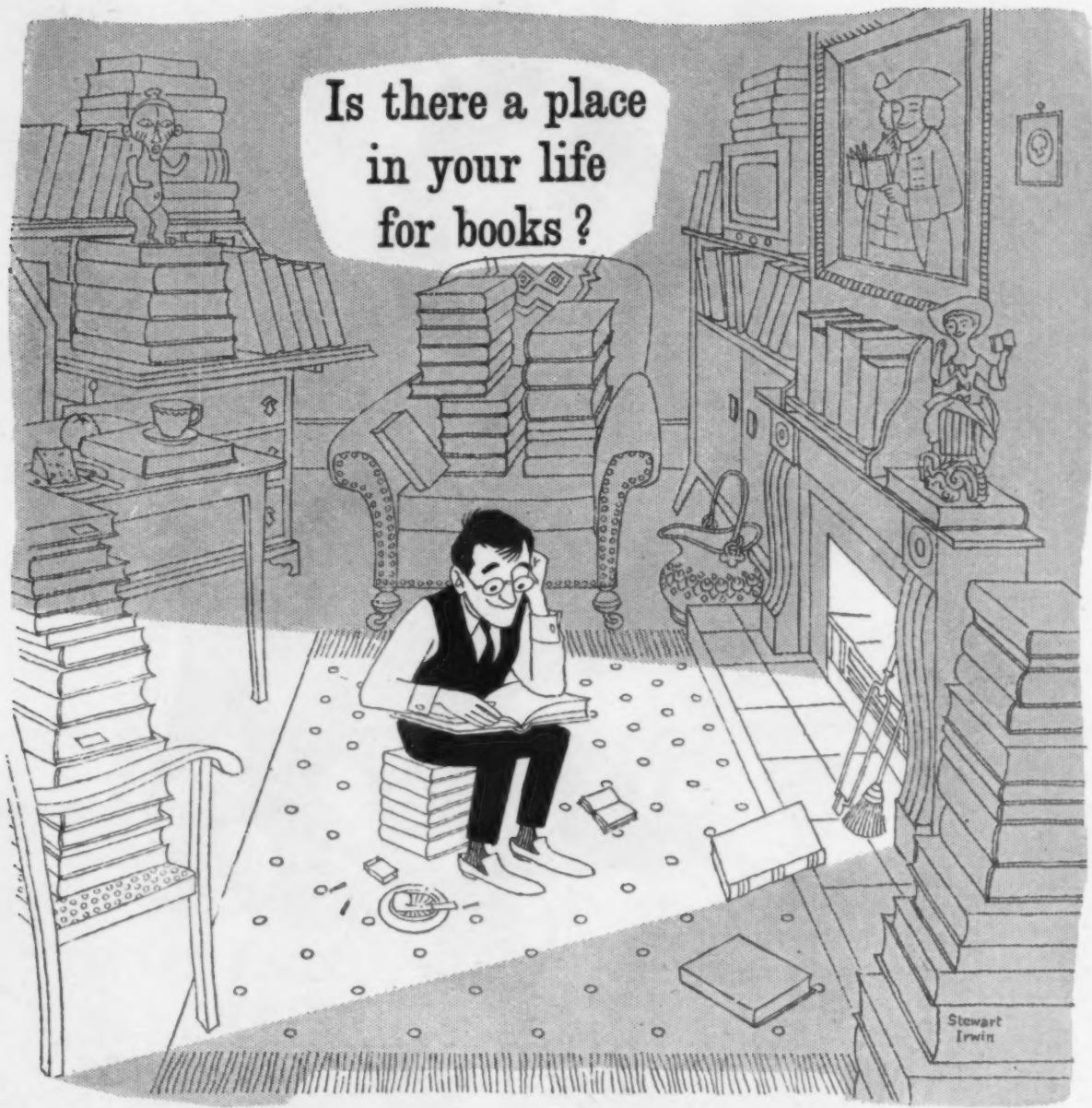
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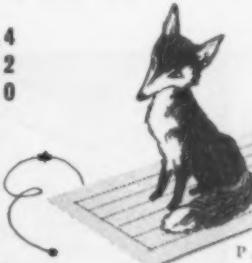
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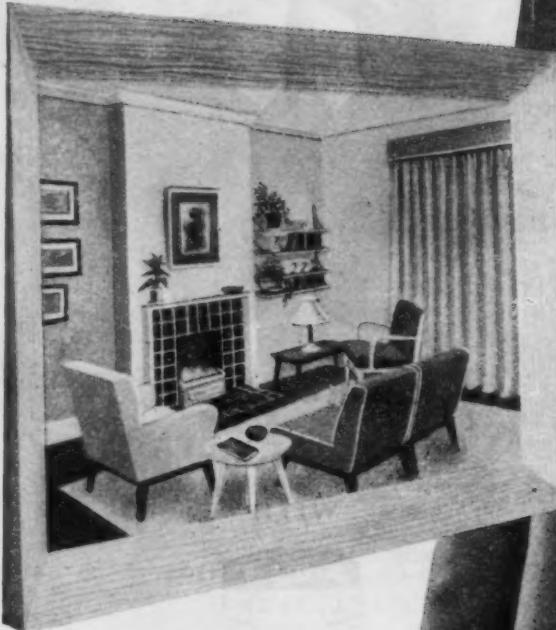
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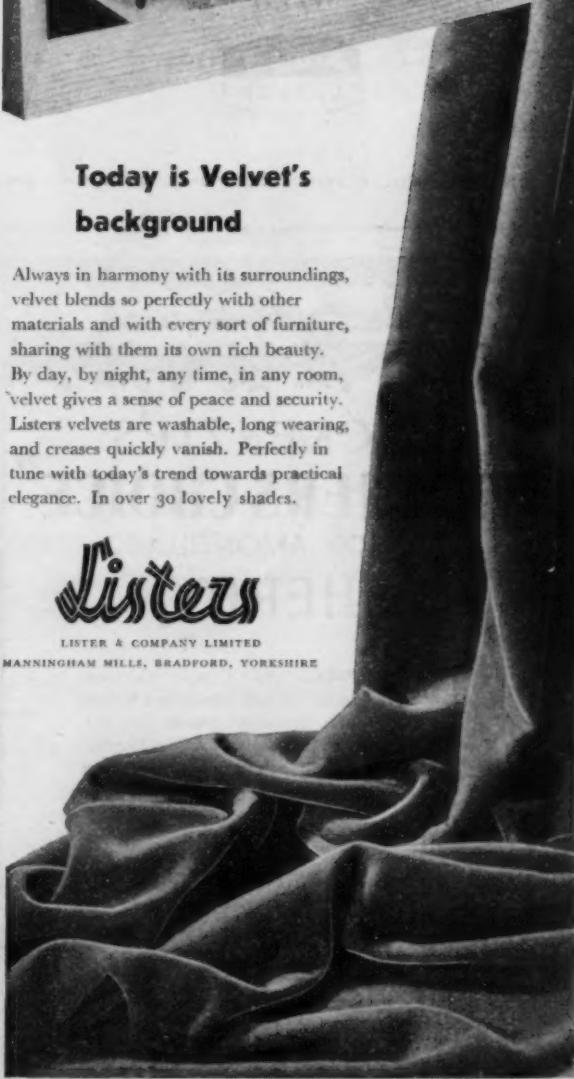


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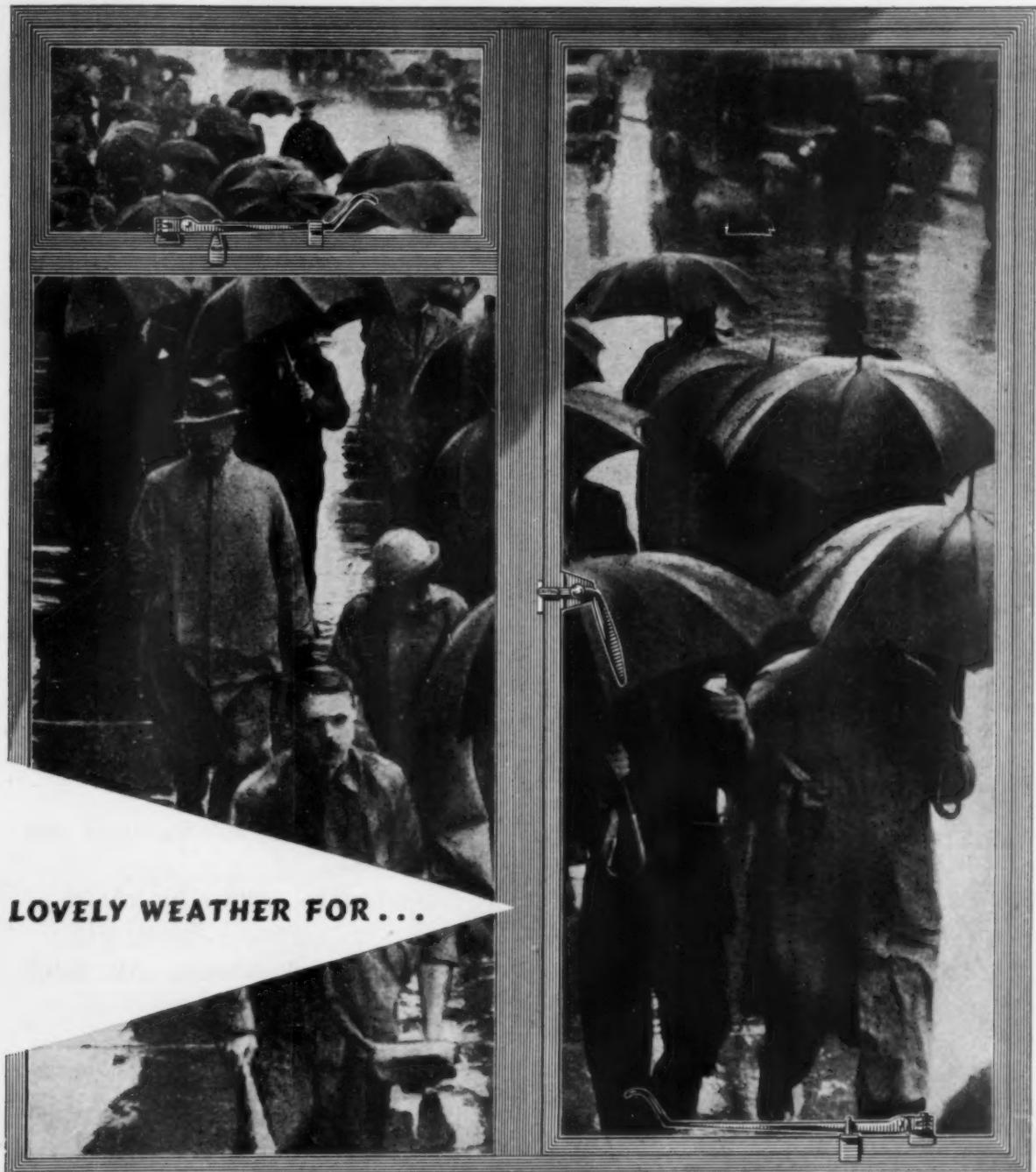
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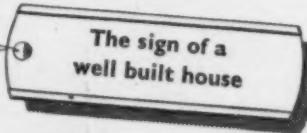
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TSW10

MAY

Snakes and Dragons

IT IS PROBABLE that, before the month of May is out, somebody will have invoked the aid of the police to deal with a snake; for both grass-snakes, which are harmless, and adders, which are not, have shaken off the last lethargies of winter and will sometimes find their way on to the property of people who do not know the difference between them. Although it is doubtless prudent in such cases to summon the forces of law and order, the precaution does not become as well as it might a nation whose patron saint slew a large dragon single-handed. Our native snakes are small and timid. In far-off countries, where there are cobras or anacondas but hardly any constables and no telephones with which to call for their assistance, the simple inhabitants deal with snakes themselves. It hardly seems right that the British should be less self-reliant. There is, moreover, always the risk that the serpent will have made itself scarce before the police arrive. "That's where it *was*, constable", pretends Mon Repos, pointing to a sheltered corner of his rockery. "What does he expect me to do now?" thinks the policeman. "Squat on the lawn and play a tune on my whistle?" Aloud he says: "Well I shouldn't let it worry you any more, sir." Next time, with any luck, Mon Repos will try and deviate less sharply from the traditions of St. George.



The Midland Bank hesitates to ascribe this state of affairs to the disappearance of gold coinage with its spirited representation of St. George. But money is still money, whatever its substance, and yours will be safer at the Midland. There's a booklet (free from all branches) to tell you 'How to open an Account'.

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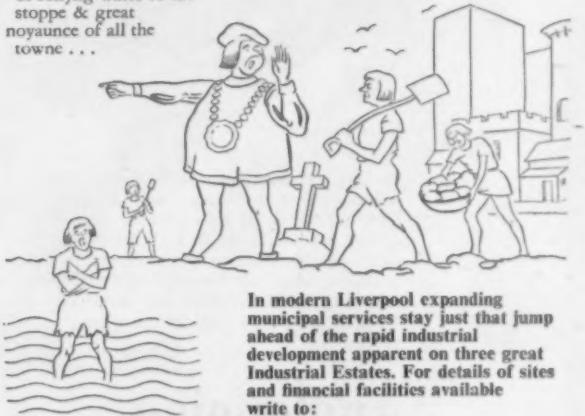
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LIVERPUDLIANA No. 4

Liverpool Strete amendyng

Extract from the Liverpool precedents (Municipal records)

1560 This vere in January & February Maystr Mayre called for a laborer furthe of ev'y houfe in the towne, oone or moe to labor at the amendyng of the strete at the Crosse in Dale Strete wheare he in his awre p'per p'son laboryng hym selffe kept the hole congregacon of labores theare too dayes . . . the water yt was broken out upon East p'tie of the Crosse theare was turned in hit ryght course for hit had worn a depe bracke of ronyng water to the stoppe & great noyance of all the towne . . .



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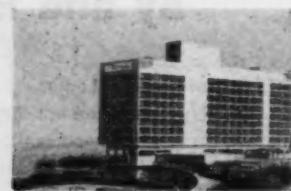
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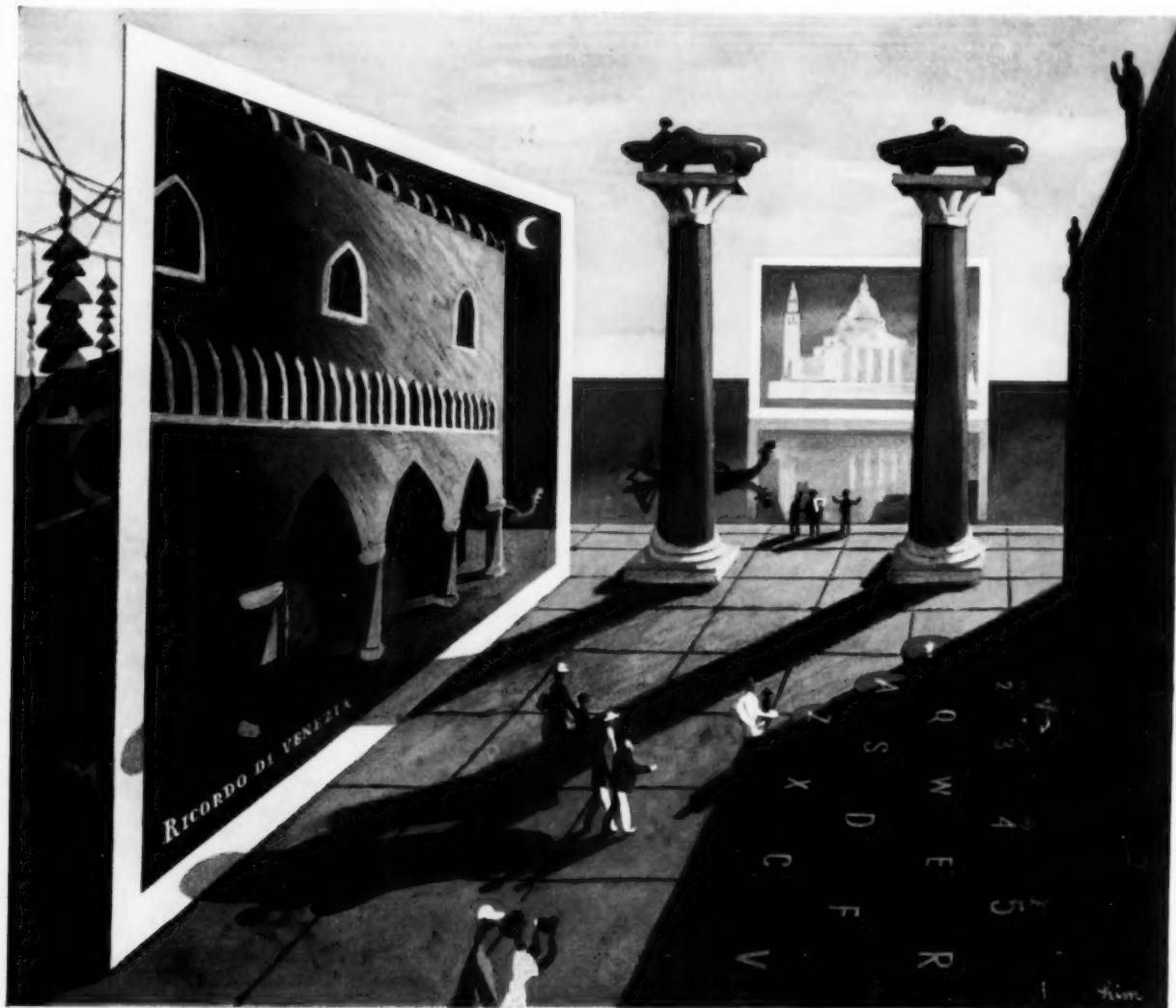


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EUROPE IN PERSCHWEPPITIVE



Let us take you to ITALY where it is difficult to disentangle the total mixture from the general impression, where millennium is dovetailed with millennium, B.C. is mixed with A.D., and A.D. tangled up in M.M. (Mille Miglia). And this is a picture of the Doge's Palace.

Here mid her fertile galleries, the priceless treasures of the plains lined with cypresses, and the Via Latina lined with advertisements, is a twin-engined Uccello. The Guardi has a souped-up double rustication which comes into action at revs. 140. In the able hands of Palladio the Buonarotti (Sistine cylinders) cornered

beautifully. Masaccio then took the lead near the historic spot, marked by the lovely Campanile of Carburetti, where Caesar (Consul) issued his Fiat, but he was quickly overhauled by Bottischewelli in his Isotta-Franchsweppski. And here is a picture of the Doge's Palace.

Such pictures by no means cover every aspect of this land of music and melody, where, though the sounding of horns is banned in the principal cities, it is often more practical, and certainly far more noisy, to draw attention to one's presence by a sudden acceleration in neutral. And this is a picture of the Doge's Palace.

Written by Stephen Potter; designed by George Him



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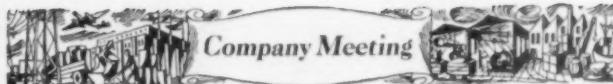
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THE BRUSH GROUP LIMITED

Position maintained despite Increasing Competition

Training for Industry—A Vital Long-term Project

The 67th Annual General Meeting of The Brush Group Limited will be held on May 17th in London.

In his Review, which has been circulated to Stockholders, Sir Ronald W. Matthews, D.L., M.I.N.S.T.T. (the Chairman) states:

The Accounts show that the year ended 31st December, 1955, was one in which we held our position in spite of increasing competition from abroad and sharply rising prices at home, coupled with severe dislocation through the dock strike.

On an increased turnover in 1955 the gross trading profit before depreciation, taxation, and other charges at £2,431,228 was almost the same as 1954. The net profit before provision for taxes was £1,123,346 compared with a figure of £1,221,576 for 1954.

Output has been well maintained in the Group and our order book has continued to show an encouraging trend. We have certainly maintained our position in the export market though it has been necessary to offer extended credit facilities to many important customers.

At all our factories great efforts have been made to speed up deliveries and to improve our reputation for punctuality and for efficient service to the customer. We have indeed received many complimentary references to our recent achievements in these directions, but our output and our export achievement would have been even more satisfactory if our suppliers had been able to maintain the delivery dates which they had promised to us.

In many markets, and most particularly those of Asia and the Middle East we are facing fierce and growing competition, particularly on price and delivery, not only from the countries of Western Europe but from those of Eastern Europe in the sphere of Russian influence. A concerted effort, for which the utmost support of our suppliers is essential, is needed if the volume of our export trade is to be maintained.

It is, I hope, by now fully realized that the railway and dock strikes in the early summer of 1955 did considerable damage to the export trade of this country and to those whose livelihood so largely depends upon it.

The Chairman then reviewed the Group's widespread manufacturing activities, comprising Brush Electrical Engineering Co., Ltd., and Brush Traction Ltd., Loughborough; Petters Limited and Bryce Berger Limited, Staines; J. and H. McLaren Ltd., Leeds; The National Gas and Oil Engine Co., Ltd., Ashton-under-Lyne; Mirrlees, Bickerton and Day, Ltd., Stockport; Vivian Diesels and Munitions Ltd., Vancouver, and Petter McLaren Service Ltd., Burton-on-the-Wolds.

The Chairman continued:

Despite the severe competition at home and abroad, I am happy to tell you that the quality of our products, the ability of our executives, and their willingness to work hard as a team have enabled us to achieve a considerable increase over the previous year's intake of new orders.

Increases in costs have necessitated some price revisions, but we have resisted price increases in general so as to compete effectively with other manufacturers at home and abroad.

The General Engineering Division which was established some years ago at Loughborough to deal with contracts involving more than one factory (and frequently involving civil engineering work as well) has fully justified its conception and a number of large contracts have been successfully negotiated during the year. These include, for example, a substantial order for the electrification of six towns and one hundred and thirty villages in Iran.

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

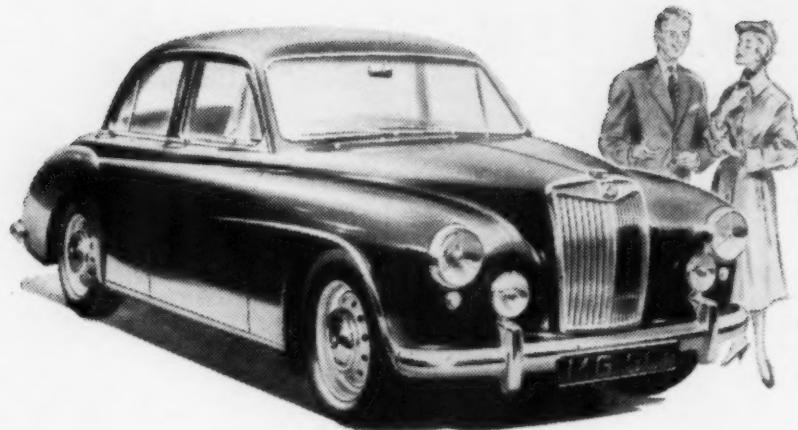
Your Board has always regarded the maintenance of good industrial relations as a matter of the highest importance. We believe that one of the basic conditions for the solution of human problems in industry to-day is really efficient management.

Our training facilities, particularly at Loughborough, have been in existence for many years and we are continually trying to improve them. We are proud of the fact that of our total of about 10,000 employees, we have nearly 1,000 under training of one kind or another at the present time. In the engineering industry particularly there is need for a constant stream of young men for training in practical engineering as well as a need for trained engineers and research workers.

We have a good, well-spread order book, a keen and experienced management and a well-led and co-operative labour force.

It has been our constant endeavour to make clear to all concerned the why and wherefore of Board and Management decisions. But we are to a large extent at the mercy of economic forces which are outside our control, and as costs of production rise with the inevitable increase in selling prices, we run grave risks of losing the export markets on which the livelihood of all of us depends.

Only if increased wages are married to increased production, so that the cost of the product remains reasonably stable, can we count on maintaining our proper and necessary share of foreign business.



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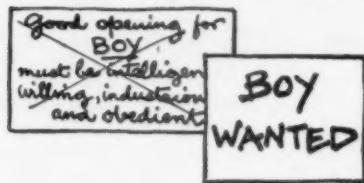
DOING its best to support a reader's assertion that Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Khrushchev bore each other a marked physical resemblance the *Sunday Express* printed juxtaposed portraits which, if anything, proved that they didn't. What was really needed was a snap of Mr. Khrushchev taken just after the English coast had disappeared from view, in pyjamas embroidered "Much Better Thanks."

Narrowing Field

ACCORDING to a newspaper profile of Mr. Lennox-Boyd his chief political ambition has always been to have charge of Britain's colonial administration. He is to be congratulated on having achieved it in the nick of time.

Same Here

CANADA, says a Canadian immigration officer, is looking for "enterprising



Britons prepared to work hard for good pay." She isn't alone in that.

Kiss of Death

SOME captiousness was displayed over the film *Nigeria Greets the Queen*, critics complaining that it contained too many handshakes, too many shots of official ceremonies and not enough close-ups. But the worst attack came from the pen that described it as "equal to anything Hollywood ever produced."

No Hard Feelings

THE Russian people are said to be well pleased with the reported success of their leaders' visit, largely due to the

removal of what might be called harmful matter in the newspaper accounts. But photographs must have presented difficulties. Perhaps it was possible to persuade readers that a display banner at Victoria saying "Keep the Red Beasts Out" was merely a bit of crankiness about imported baby bears.

Strained Silence

THREATS of a strike by restaurant musicians in the West End caused alarm in the kitchens, where chefs



leafed frenziedly through their reference libraries in search of a recipe for noiseless soup.

Neat

CELEBRATION of the three hundred and ninety-second anniversary of anything is apt to leave speakers with nothing very new to say. Lord Evershed, proposing "The Immortal Memory" at Stratford-upon-Avon, is therefore to be congratulated on his tribute to Shakespeare as "a very great Englishman."

Tyrant Beauty

PRIZES of "a challenge trophy, medals and money vouchers" are being offered by a north London council to encourage housing estate tenants to smarten up their front gardens. Runners-up will get a tastefully framed eviction notice.

Money to Burn

As with past announcements by the Chairman of the Coal Board, the recent one could only be a build-up to higher prices. The average householder

skimmed the reports with dull resignation, checked only by the mention of £1,000,000,000, which for a moment he took to be the new price per ton.

Queue Here for V.I.P. Lounge

HEADED by the Earl and Countess of Harewood forty distinguished guests flew in the B.E.A. aircraft inaugurating a new service to Venice last week. There was also one passenger who had bought his seat. The trip could have been embarrassing, but it is understood that perfect manners were displayed by the forty, and every effort made to pretend that the common, fare-paying person had as much right to be there as they had.

No Cribbing, Anyway

ONE impression taken away by Marshal Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev is that British newspapers are allowed to say what they like. When crowds visited the Russian ships at Portsmouth, the *Daily Mail* reported: "Women



fainted, children were crushed, and Admiralty police swept aside in the rush by the crowd." Or, as *The Times* put it, "Admiralty police handled the queues deftly and all reached the ships without difficulty."

Something for the Dustman

WENCESLAS SQUARE, Prague, is reported to be the scene of bold non-conformism by the official party propaganda store, which is displaying "new and even bigger" portraits of President Zapotocky. The only explanation is that the public must be

given a chance to demonstrate its anti-personality feelings by having one to throw away.

"Fleet Street—and Hurry!"

VISITORS from abroad are often much touched, on royal occasions, by the many loyal subjects who line the route with their eager little cameras, apparently intent on securing a cherished personal record. Illusions were badly



shattered by last week's picture of Princess Margaret with something in her eye, captioned, "An Express reader is there . . . the result is an unusual picture, and a lucrative one."

Old Stuff

MUCH hysterical publicity has greeted Britain's new helicopter, which is said to be able to hover indefinitely, and put passengers down in places hitherto regarded as impossible. A British Railways spokesman wants to know what's new about that.

Double Time?

THE Lord's Day Observance Society is fully active just at present, with denunciations of the Duke of Edinburgh, the B.B.C., the I.T.A., the Football Association and the L.C.C. At this rate it may have to work on Sundays.

Can't Trust Anybody

No official explanation has been given of the recent outbreak of fire in the Tass offices in Fleet Street, but an unusual theory was put forward in the *Liverpool Daily Post*: "The Tass Agency fire is believed to have been raised by Mr. Malik (Russian Ambassador in London) during talks with Lord Reading (Minister of State) . . ."

Old and True

As from May 5, the "Rainbow" ceases separate publication and is merged with "Tiny Tots"

*Eagle and Rocket offer jet-age joys
To win the pence of atom-era boys.
Yet still, it seems, despite the current
trend,
Someone gets something from the
Rainbow's end.*

THE opening last week by the Duke of Edinburgh of the Council of Industrial Design's Centre in the Haymarket caught most other Government departments off their guard, and it is not surprising that other Ministries, glowering in the direction of the Board of Trade, should have made haste to work out similar shows of their own. What, after all, could be more finely attuned to the spirit of our time than this exhibition, through which the Board, at a cost of a mere forty thousand pounds a year of public money, can tell the public why it must mistrust its own taste but rely on that of the Council of Industrial Design? The fact that the public is quite right to do so makes the whole thing more characteristically neo-Elizabethan than ever.

First off the mark with a new scheme has been the Ministry of Health, whose Disease Centre is to be housed in one of the new office-blocks in Piccadilly, and is expected to be opened later this year by the Duke of Edinburgh. The Ministry has not the same advantages as the Board of Trade, of course, whose collection of elegant industrial products cannot fail to be pleasing to the eye; but a great effort is to be made to provide something equally persuasive.

"What we have to do," a spokesman said, "is to convince the public that the illnesses from which they are suffering

are in the main not those from which they, and the nation in general, can derive most benefit. Reflection would show them that they would be doing themselves, and the nation, a service by contracting illnesses which are not only more useful in themselves but which will help the export drive by stimulating the manufacture of medicaments at present only in restricted production."

People should realize that the growing complexity of modern health, and the increasing provision of free medical services, made the art of wise suffering more and more difficult for the ordinary man in the bed. It was hoped that the Disease Centre would suggest interesting and unhackneyed alternatives to the usual run of undistinguished complaints to which the British as a nation were unhappily prone."

The next announcement came from the Foreign Office. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, speaking at Cuckfield, said "The growing complexity of foreign relations makes the art of choosing one's friends increasingly hard for the man in the street. Every year, endless goodwill is thrown away by Britons on foreigners who do not need it or perhaps even deserve it. At the Foreign Relations Centre we shall have a permanent display of the best kind of foreigners, and we hope in this way to persuade the public to like only those whose friendship will suit the Government's foreign policy."

Shortly after, Mr. Watkinson announced the forthcoming opening by the Duke of Edinburgh of the Transport Centre. In a speech at Uckfield he said "The growing complexity of modern methods of travel compels us." But perhaps the most interesting scheme so far is that announced by the Treasury. Sir Edward Boyle, speaking at Harrow, said "At the Tax Centre, which I hope the Duke of Edinburgh will open some time next spring, we shall have a permanent display of modern and well designed methods of taxation. There will also be roulette, *chemin-de-fer* and craps. We feel that such a centre will be a real stimulus to the British public to get out from the rut of ordinary income tax and purchase tax, and plunge on something measuring up more adequately to this exciting Elizabethan age in which we have the privilege to live."

B. A. Y.





BIRTH OF A NATION

*God, Confucius, Marx and Allah
Bless our native Singapore;
May its trade and population
Keep increasing evermore.
(From the Singapore national anthem)*

Myself as Leader

By INEZ HOLDEN

I WAS once the leader of a gang of hooligans.

I found it very troublesome at the time and have often wondered since if other leaders and even dictators, on a grandiose scale, experienced the same difficulties.

My main preoccupation was how to get away from my followers—and especially my chief lieutenant, Italian Joe, a very well-informed boy six months my senior.

Joe, born in the Bronx, of Italian origin, was ten years old when I met him. He wore his hair parted in the middle, he had teeth pointed like the fangs of a wolf and ears which stuck out, giving him a curious bat look. He wore a gigantic pin, in the shape of a sword, across his tie, and the tie itself was also a masterpiece of over-statement, a

design of dollar bills superimposed on girls' legs.

Besides Italian Joe there was Frenchy, the son of a pawnbroker; Inky, who already had an early morning newspaper round and consequently was always tired by noon; Curly who lived with his Communist stepfather; and a rather silly boy called Seb Kettle, the son of a chartered accountant who had twice been overtaken by the Law.

I had been sent to stay with a nurse who had looked after me during an early illness. Her name was Nurse Hayhoe, and after inheriting some money she had bought a little boarding-house in a small seaside town in Ireland.

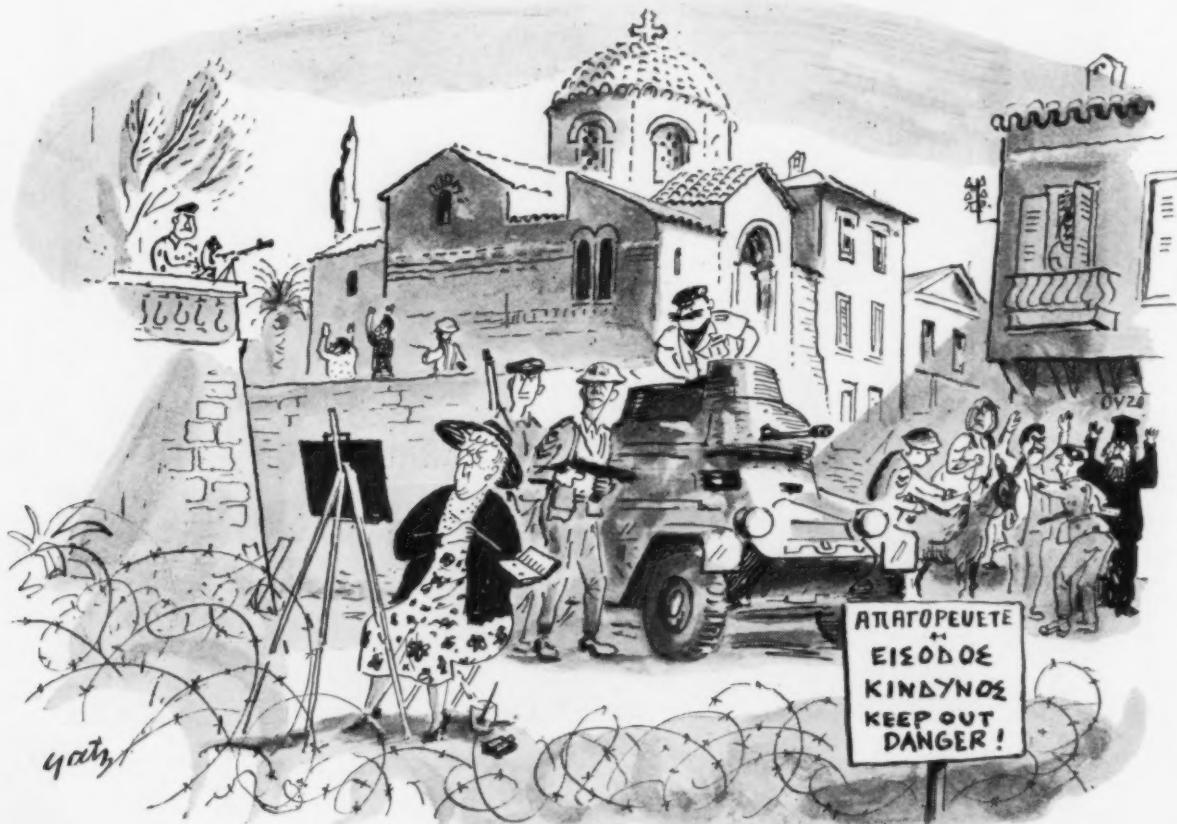
On the night of my arrival the local newspaper headlined the story of "A Blonde Girl-Bandit," said to be a former wall of death rider from a circus,

who had carried out a series of daring smash-and-grab raids in a nearby industrial town, making her getaway on a motor bicycle.

The next morning I bicycled down to the beach, practising a few of the simple tricks I had taught myself—riding with my hands clasped over my head, turning a corner sharply while leaning over with one foot on the ground, and so on.

Not only was I the only fair-haired girl on the beach with any ability as a trick cyclist but I was also the only one owning a bicycle. This enabled the children to identify me with an admired legendary figure of the adult underworld and to make me their leader at our first encounter.

Every day we used to meet outside the amusement arcade. We would then make for a place called the "Souvenir





"That's Jack Thompson junior, by Jack Thompson senior out of Molly Gray."

Tea Shop" situated on a high hill overlooking the town. Here we sat at a tin table, beneath a beach umbrella, drinking ginger ale.

The pair of binoculars I normally used for bird-watching I now carried slung round my neck, and this gave me an added air of authority in the eyes of the other children.

Even seen through binoculars, at this distance, the amusement arcade, fortuneteller's parlour, boxing booth, cheap store, garish hotel and newly built cinema gave to the town an impression of gilded squalor, but I described what I saw and Italian Joe made a rough map of the district, circling the places where he thought "mugs" might be found. He then rehearsed the "hard luck stories" and led the gang back down the hill.

I stayed beneath the beach umbrella, reading *Tiger Tim* and drinking ginger ale, until the others returned with the money they had got by begging.

The next day the gang visited the cheap store while I sat at the same table, outside the souvenir tea shop, looking through my binoculars at an island out to sea where I believed some kittiwakes were nesting.

Within the hour the boys came back, bringing me a hammer, two pairs of art silk knickers, a man's poplin shirt, a

silk vest and some knives in leather sheaths.

I explained that Nurse Hayhoe's Guest House was not an ideal dumping ground because of the red-headed policeman boarding there who had recently been raised to the rank of sergeant over the heads of older men.

"That's all right," Joe said, "Frenchy kin take care of the stuff, his old man's a receiver of stolen property by profession. In fact we could change the kid's name to 'Feney,' only we don't want to make ourselves conspicuous." He grinned, showing his wolf-pointed teeth. "De knives we kin keep for ourselves."

A few days later I was looking through my binoculars at the long line of cars drawn up outside the hired hall where a debate between two opposing political parties was in progress.

"I suppose if there was no air in those tyres," I remarked, "the cars wouldn't be able to move at all," and at once the gang moved down towards the town with their knives, Curly chattering happily away about "Fascist flunkies, right-wing deviationists, vile Trotsky vipers" and so on.

Looking back on this incident I see now that we were saved from serious trouble because each political party

thought that the other had sabotaged the cars, damaging a few of their own to throw dust in the eyes of their opponents.

But a day came when my ownership of the only bicycle and the one pair of binoculars was not enough. When the others set off on a mass non-paying expedition to the cinema—carried out by subtle infiltration through the exits—Italian Joe stayed behind.

"Think yerself very clever doantyer," he said when we were alone.

As there did not seem any particular point in saying "No" I answered "Yes."

"We've bin noticin'," Joe said, "that when we go off on these dangerous jobs you don't do nothin'. And there's another thing, Curly says that it's no accident that you associate with the reactionary bourgeois."

"Who's that?" I asked.

"Why, the police sergeant of course."

It so happened that my affection for the red-headed police sergeant had turned to hatred that very morning because while I was watching him mending his motor bicycle in Nurse Hayhoe's garden I had put so many questions to this normally good-natured man that he had suddenly shouted out "Slide off before I clip you one."

"That's all right," I told Joe. "As a

matter of fact I have decided to kill the red-headed police sergeant."

"Holy mackerel," Joe said. "Moider."

"Exactly," I answered, "I don't say I shall do it myself, but I shall arrange for it to be done."

Joe's bat-like ears turned slightly pink at the edges as they tended to do when he was baffled. "I canta believe it," he said.

I told him to take my bicycle and follow the gang down to the town. I knew that he had never learnt to ride a bicycle, and after I had watched him fall off three times before he reached the bottom of the hill I took out a large piece of smooth white paper and wrote on it in red ink "Rise up and slay the sergeant."

As this was the day of the police sports I thought it would be quite simple to smuggle the note into the police station, but it turned out to be very difficult. However, I managed to leave the note in the rack for the police officers' mail while the policeman in charge was boiling a kettle for his tea. I then moved quickly into the recreation room and from there jumped from a window ledge into an alleyway. I ran through the underground section of a garage, coming up safely on the far side of the street, but did not stop running until I reached Nurse Hayhoe's garden, where I nearly knocked over a retired petty officer who had come to this place hoping for a rest.

From my room upstairs I could hear this man complaining about my being "a terrible tomboy," and his wife answering "Oh, she'll grow out of it."

"What rot," I thought, "as if anyone could grow out of being a murderer."

Up to this time I had not doubted that as soon as the policemen found the anonymous note they would take the hint and kill the ambitious sergeant, so that I felt somewhat disconcerted when the sergeant himself strolled in, bringing me some chocolates and "comics" as a present because he knew that I was leaving the next night to stay with an uncle in England.

As I listened to the talk over the tea table in Nurse Hayhoe's boarding house I realized that although there were similarities between our childs' play and the adult world there were also vast differences. I realized also that as soon as the note was found in the police station someone would get into serious trouble and, almost certainly, it would be us. So I went down to the amusement arcade to tell Joe to get the note back. I then returned to the boarding house for a quiet game of cards with the police sergeant, the retired petty officer, his wife and Nurse Hayhoe herself.

Joe accomplished his mission by getting the others to "create a disturbance" outside the police station while he slipped in and retrieved the note. He then pretended he was there to report the loss of a camera. Joe did not own a camera but he was able to give a good description of one he had once tried to steal.

From the ship that was to take me back to England I looked down and saw the whole gang on the quayside. It occurred to me at this moment that it was on my behalf that Joe had got the note back from the police station. So,

while the attention of all the crew and most of the passengers was concentrated on a temperamental racehorse which did not want to come aboard, I went down to a lower deck and took my bicycle from under a colossal tarpaulin covering labelled "Do Not Touch."

I managed to get the machine off the ship and as I wheeled it up to Joe I whispered to him "You'll soon learn to ride it all right."

"Dead easy," I heard him telling the others in his boastful way as I ran back up the gangway.

In England my uncle questioned me about the disappearance of the bicycle.

"I gave it to a boy I met on the beach," I answered. But when I saw that my uncle was frowning I added: "A poor Italian boy. An orphan." I did not know whether Joe was an orphan or not, but I thought of this because I remembered Joe having said "An orphan is de best thing fer a kid like me ter be."

"Oh, well, I expect it will be very nice for the dear little chap," my uncle remarked, and I thought of tough Joe from the Bronx with his bat-like ears, his terrifying tie, with the sword-shaped pin, and his blood-curdling manner of showing his pointed teeth as he smiled.

I also thought about the determined way in which Italian Joe had set himself the task of training to be a juvenile delinquent. Then I remembered how Joe had said "If only I had some means to get around more I could easily organize de kids from de next place into this gang."

Now that he had my bicycle Joe would surely travel far and fast in order to get together enough children to terrorize the whole town.

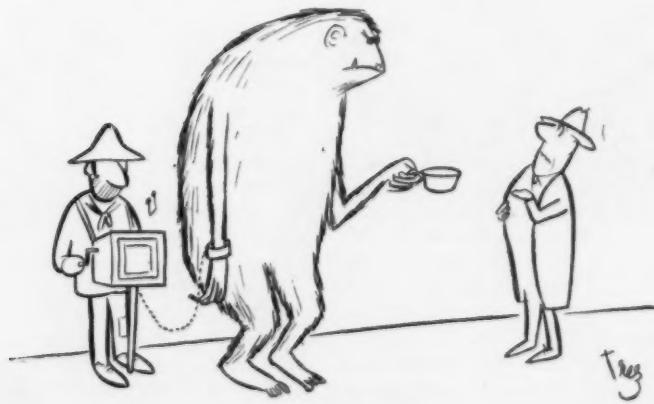
"Yes," my uncle said, "in giving your old bicycle to this poor lonely little orphan you did the right thing, my dear. A kindly action never did anyone any harm yet."

I did not say anything, but sighed deeply, thinking "Well I dare say one will soon."

"Record Baby's first word . . . the wedding reception . . . your favourite music! Keep them alive for ever on your — the portable tape recorder."

Advertisement in Evening Standard

Let's check the sequence again, shall we?





"It's a little chilly, so I've put an extra dog on your bed."



A Touch of Spring

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

TRY me with something. You want to know who the new Italian Navy representative is with N.A.T.O.? Easy. Rear-Admiral Ernesto De Pellegrini dai Coi—just reported for duty at Malta. What is the design on the new Cyprus 5-mil piece? Answer, a man carrying a load of copper. And, if you're interested, a Mr. Everson is Her Majesty's new Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at San Salvador. Coming nearer home, the latest foot-and-mouth outbreak is at West Tisbury. Did you know, and if so do you care, that at Bristol University, on April 19th, Dr. R. Schwab delivered a lecture under the auspices of the Ergonomics

Research Society, entitled "Some Problems Concerning Elderly Locomotive Drivers"?

This isn't as hard as it looks. Day by day an avalanche of cyclostyled reading matter rushes on to my desk. Its continuous removal to the waste basket is exhausting, and when I pause for a rest it piles up and is apt to get read. Lord Mountbatten's itinerary in the Far East has stuck itself to the base of my pastepot, and may be with me for some time. Other matter is more transitory. News that the drawback of Customs duty has been increased on imported unblanched shelled almonds is almost burnt away with fallen cigarettes; tea stains obliterate much of a junior Minister's recent

speech at the opening of the Automation Conference of the North London Productivity Committee of the British Productivity Council; and, trapped in a drawer, a Colonial Office notice is just protruding enough to tell me that a piece of stone from the Houses of Parliament has been presented to the Gold Coast.

I get a sense of a great deal going on in the world, and—particularly at this season of the year—of not being able to feel keenly about it. True, I was momentarily attracted by a note from the Press Office of the Nature Conservancy, starkly headed "The Facts about the Buzzard," but a glance showed me that the style had nothing of the spring

about it ("it should be borne in mind that . . ." "it should be appreciated that" . . . "few cases of attacks on lambs are authenticated . . ."). I looked wistfully out at the blue skies over Fleet Street, and heard the pneumatic drills singing *hey ding-a-ding*, and when I looked back I was delighted to see that a seasonable element had arrived, something with a smack of young shoots about it, instinct with the slow warmth of rustic voices.

I have had to wait more than three years (I see from an introductory note) for the Report of the Committee on Hedgerow and Farm Timber. The selfless gentlemen appointed to the inquiry have been at it since January 1953—it takes a real public spirit to slave away all that time, ferreting out hitherto unknown facts. For example:

"Trees growing in small groups or clumps, in rows or avenues, and even scattered individually . . . have a great effect on the appearance and life of the countryside, quite apart from the contribution which they make to the supply of timber."

Or, again, another piece of shrewd observation on the same theme:

"It has been said that the grandeur of elm, the detail and variety of oak, beech and horse-chestnut, dotted over many parts of the countryside, their colour varying with the changing seasons, and the wych elm, sycamore and ash which soften the bleaker districts further north, are virtually indispensable elements in the beauty of our land."

When you come up with findings of this kind, and have such enviable powers of expression, you must feel that the last three years of your life have not been misspent.

I ought to explain, perhaps, that I am not in possession of the whole report. That would cost 3s. 6d. at H.M. Stationery Office. What I have is one of those labour-saving abstracts, produced for journalists by other journalists, gutting the original ruthlessly, discarding all the tedious matter which hasn't a dog's chance of getting a mention in the papers and offering a few glinting nuggets of pure gold. As, for example:

"The Committee point out that much of the timber in clumps and spinneys, parks and avenues and lanes and highways, and to a certain extent in hedgerows, was naturally re-

generated and possibly a heritage from earlier forests . . ." which opens up entirely new vistas of thought for anyone who has found himself wondering, in the wakeful small hours, where trees come from.

The Committee, I am relieved to note, does not adopt a purely material attitude to timber. That gracious word "amenity" is ever ready to its pen.

"They [trees] harbour wild life and shelter wild flowers, and they provide amenity."

"Amenity . . . could often be improved by pruning and thinning."

"On the subject of amenity, the Committee say the character and beauty of much of the countryside is very largely dependent on the irregular and generous distribution of our trees."

"Trees which would provide timber, shelter and amenity without harm to agriculture . . ."

It was, as I say, a joy and a refreshment, amid the daily welter of Italian admirals, automation conferences and elderly locomotive drivers, to come across this happy babbling of green fields. I felt I wanted to rush out of the office and sit under an amenity, even climb one.

Unfortunately life has caught up with me in the meantime, and a formidable pile-up of other cyclostyled matter has accumulated. At a random glance, for instance, I see that the Minister of Supply has written to me. He says that the maximum prices for proof laid down by the Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1950, have been increased by the Gun Barrel Proof (Alteration of Maximum Prices) Order, 1956.





Anniversary Ode

S. FREUD, BORN MAY 6, 1856

IN man's long innocence before the fall
Of that obscuring screen
That masked the source from which his actions spring,
He looked within and knew what he had seen,
Reason and instinct fighting for control
Of what he was content to call his soul,
Man against brute, while Nature held the ring:
And that, he thought, was all.

Alas for lost simplicity, alas
For innocence destroyed.
A hundred years ago to-day came FREUD
And held man up a dark, distorting glass,
Showing that always close behind
What thought itself his mind
There walked its dark big brother, driving it.
When it put out its hand to act,
A second hand in fact,
Clawed and a bit unclean,
Reached up from some unappetizing pit
And did the unforeseen.

Now man meets man and looks, not in his eye,
Which once he called the window of his soul,
But at his back, to see
His ego-id relation sound and whole;
And seeing it will cry
"How am I, brother?" and his friend reply
"Well, I thank heaven, friend. But what of me?
How are my self and I?"

So too with FREUD's assistance we have read
The dusky obverse of the face of fame,
What was unconscious in who now are dead
But, dying, left a name.
We gauge the grief and fear,
The calloused tags of infant temperament,
That underlie high thought and noble airs:
What fantasies bred King, and Edward, Lear;
What Wordsworth did not know his Lucy meant;
Why Lizzie Borden laughed upstairs;
Why Milton wrote so much too much
And Crippen not at all;
What nursery trauma made the Nelson touch
Or galvanized St. Paul.

Knowledge of cause is power to prevent
A like development,
And though, through freedom of the British press,
To breed a killer brings some happiness,
Yet parents with a poet in their flock
Cannot escape the slur.
Since, then, through FREUD, we know the form
Of every psychic shock
That brings such deviations from the norm,
It is for us to shield the infant mind
From shocks of every kind,
And see to it that such shall not recur.

P. M. HUBBARD

Life and Letters

By LORD KINROSS

WHAT Miss Mitford is to Life, Miss Holt is to Letters. Her book, *Write a Good Letter: A Modern Guide to Personal Correspondence*, is a classic (published at a mere five shillings).

Miss Holt offers the lettered a series of preliminary warnings. "Avoid," she enjoins, "those 'breathless' screeds which convey a sense of rush and flurry to the recipient . . . Oddments of torn paper, sent with 'Excuse this scrap,' are excusable in special circumstances, but where this becomes a habit, enjoyment and skill in letter-writing will never develop . . . An untidy-looking envelope is not only discourteous to the recipient but actually can cause him mild discomfort if received in company."

Thus instructed a cat may write to a Queen, taking care to select "the best plain white or light blue unlined paper," beginning "Madam, or May it please your Majesty," and remaining her Majesty's "most loyal subject and faithful (or obedient) servant." She may with confidence address tidy-looking envelopes to a whole galaxy of Highnesses, Graces, Lordships, Ladyships, Worships and Honourables—no mere "Hons.", like those of Miss Mitford, but The Right Honourable The Lady Margaret, The Right Honourable Lord Arthur (eldest son of an Earl), The Honourable Miss Daphne, or her younger sister the Honourable Mary (*sic, sic, sic, sic*).

The cream of Britain, inspired by some hundreds of specimens of Miss Holt's epistolary style, is thus now equipped to write a letter of appreciation to the Gas Board, a request to a Film Star for a Photograph, a complaint to a Neighbour *re* Noise of Radio or Footsteps Overhead or to the Laundry *re* Loss of Articles, a letter to a local newspaper *re* litter or one Arranging a Meeting to Break off an Engagement.

All, with her guidance, may master the social graces, "the code found satisfactory among educated people leading 'busy' social lives," accepting, declining or even issuing invitations without a qualm. Formal acceptances, they learn, must be in the present tense: "'Mrs. A will be pleased to accept' indicates slipshod thinking or education." But, "it is always in order

to add a further comment beyond the bare acceptance if it adds to the appreciative tone of the reply"—for example, "and much looks forward to the occasion."

Informal invitations are issued, accepted or declined with kind regards, sincerely. Moreover "pleasant and friendly little turns of phrase can add a note of warmth and welcome." Thus Miss Holt's Mrs. Burton, of Dahlia Lodge, Ashmead, inviting the new neighbours to dinner, adds: "If your excellent 'baby-sitter' is not available for Friday evening, you might like an introduction to ours. She is most kind and reliable—an ex-nurse too—and I think Tommy privately hopes we shall often be out." Her Mrs. Symington, accepting, adds: "I think we both feel more at home in Ashmead since the Social last week: you were so welcoming and thoughtful in introducing us round. How very kind of you to suggest a baby-sitter! But all is well. Julia is free on Friday." And tens of thousands write accordingly.

When invitations are declined with sincere regret it is important, says Miss Holt, to make this clear. "The best way is to hint at some other way of meeting in the future." There are occasions, on the other hand, for the *Reply to Invitation from Somebody who is Pressing Unwelcome Friendship*:

DEAR MRS. BAXTER,—It is kind of you to invite me so often to visit you, but I am afraid that again I have to decline. As a matter of fact I am so very busy these days with demands arising out of my work and family obligations that it is really difficult to take in any more social commitments without neglecting somebody or something else.

I am sure that as a busy woman yourself you will understand how I am placed.

I wish you success with the Fête you are planning.

Yours sincerely,
FLORENCE BINNS

In this all-polite society, where Manners Maketh Woman, week-end invitations are from teatime on Friday, and: "Do not plan to leave us till afternoon on Monday, as we would like to take you to the town's new Art Club for lunch." In a letter of thanks "the memory of this happy visit will remain

with me for a long time." Just so on marriage: "A handsome jam jar such as the one you have sent will not only be a constant reminder of our wedding but is the sort of article we are certain to use."

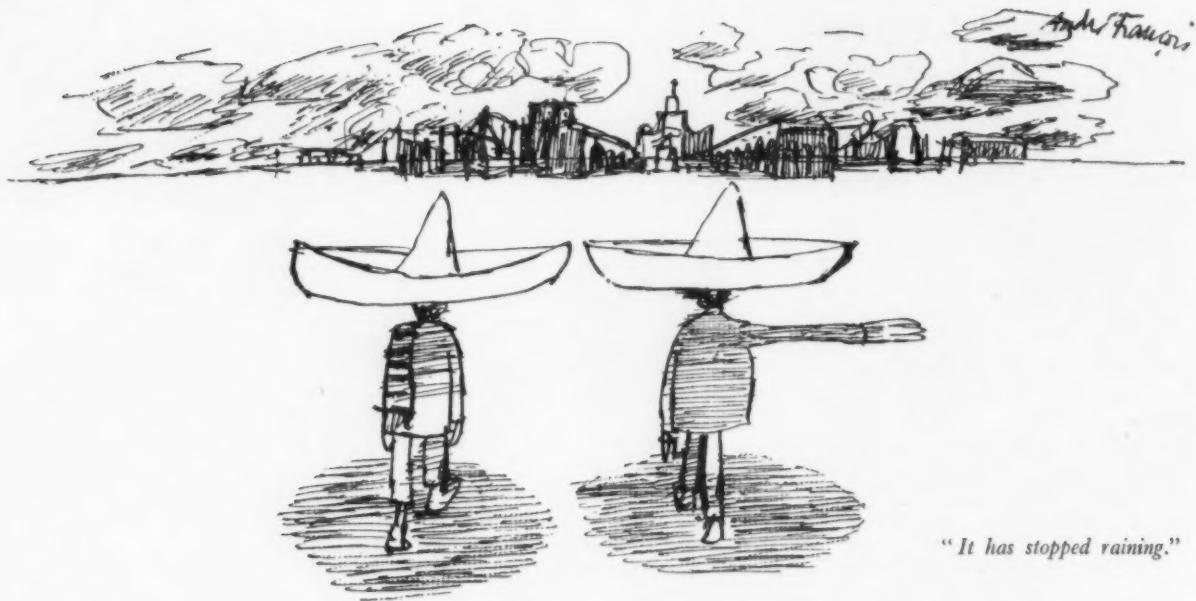
Congratulations are timely *On the Birth of a Child* ("No words of mine can elaborate the happiness you must be feeling"), *On Success in an Important Examination* ("Accept the best wishes of us all for the future, which looks 'set fair' for you"), *On the Promotion of a Friend's Husband* ("I have just heard that Bob has been appointed Head of his Department at Dorridge's. John and I know that you would guess how pleased we are for you both, but I want to express that pleasure"). Condolences, in which "spontaneous friendliness is completely suitable," may be *From a Friend, From a Working Colleague, On the Death of Son or Husband where Mourner is believed to be particularly inconsolable*.

Politeness reigns equally in love as in death. Not merely invitations but proposals of marriage are given, accepted or refused by the ten thousand in Mrs. Holt's pleasant and friendly turns of phrase:

JENNIFER DEAR,—I wonder if you guess what I was trying to say on Saturday evening? Call me a coward if you like, but in case the answer is "No," well, I felt I couldn't bear just then to hear you say it. You are such a sweet straightforward girl, and I knew you



"I'm sweating on a big treble—
Manchester City, Philius II and
Premium Bonds."



"It has stopped raining."

wouldn't buoy me up with false hopes.

Would you think of being engaged to me? . . .

With my love,
Bob

BOB DEAR,—I nearly cried over your letter. You put it so beautifully—and it was such a thrilling surprise to have you say it. You know I am not the sort of girl to give "snap" answers over anything . . . But I know in my heart that we are right for each other . . .

Love,
JENNIFER

No such acceptance, alas! but only a refusal is penned to the *Proposal of Marriage from an Older Man to a Friend of Long Standing*: "My Dear Mary, . . . Have you, I wonder, realized that I have begun to regard you as not only a dear friend but someone whom I am most anxious to keep in my life, whatever ups and downs lie ahead for either of us, etc. Yours, JOHN."

"John Dear,—This is the hardest letter I have ever had to write, etc. . . . Yours with appreciation, MARY."

Such epistles, in centuplicate, from the archives of tens of thousands of Stately homes, will supply valuable data for the social historian on the manners and modes of the great, lettered U-bone of twentieth century Britain.

Charity Balls

OUR hearts are welling with a kind of pity
And we've all had a snifter and are fairly fain
To put a little something in the Cat Club's kitty
Or free the Friends of Freedom from financial strain.
Appeals and pleas and pamphlets have been vain, vain, vain,
So get your scent and lipstick and your compact packed.
It's nice to think our gaiety is someone's gain;
We are all going dancing as a charitable act.

Put money in your purse. The Conversion of the City—
Its sinners or its building-sites; it's not yet plain—
Means that old tombola, and a chap must do his bit; he
Must raffle for a reindeer that he can't maintain.
O fill your fist with florins; though it's plain, plain, plain
That you won't win much, yet your betting will have backed
The Fund for Research on the Causes of Migraine.
We are all going dancing as a charitable act.

Folk may laugh at us; it's easy to be witty
About how it apparently goes against the grain
For anybody reasonably smart or rich or pretty
To exercise their charity without champagne,
But who's to enthuse over mules in Spain
Or pensioners in Stepney in the pure abstract
Not just this evening but again, again, again?
So we're all going dancing as a charitable act.

Prince, my fee for running the committee
Is a tidy little packet I might otherwise have lacked:
Hence the refrain that appears throughout my ditty:
We are all going dancing as a charitable act.

PETER DICKINSON

America Day by Day

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

WELL, the World Bridge Championship tournament, played at the Hotel Claridge, Paris, is over, and the French team, headed by the Messieurs Pierre Ghestem and René Bacherich, are whooping and throwing their hats in the air, while Charles Goren, Lee Hazen and the other representatives of the United States sit huddled in a corner, telling one another that, after all, it is only a game.

The result apparently was against all the ruling of the form book, and I wish I knew more about Bridge, so that I could give you an expert analysis of the run of the play. All I have to go on is what Mr. Hazen told an interviewer just after the French had scored the final goal, or whatever one does at Bridge.

"We in America," said Mr. Hazen, "are used to playing with a conventional system. But they have borrowed from the Viennese, the Swedish and the Norwegian."

This seems to show our Gallic neighbours in a very dubious light. Scarcely cricket, one feels. Naturally an American who sits down to play Bridge with a Frenchman expects him to play *like* a Frenchman. It disconcerts him when the other suddenly tears off his whiskers, and shouts "April fool! I'm a Norwegian." He is bewildered and at a loss. He forgets what are trumps, and even, if of a particularly nervous temperament, forgets that he is playing Bridge at all and keeps saying "Snap!" every time a card is laid down. You can't win world tournaments that way.

Still more unsettling to the American team must have been the conditions under which the matches were played.

"The French system," says Mr. Hazen, "is based on no interference."

One sees what this means. When you play Bridge in France you do it in an atmosphere of cloistered calm, broken only by an occasional "Nice work, old man" (*Joli travail, mon vieux*), "At-a-boy" (*Voilà le garçon*), and so on, and it would obviously take Americans, accustomed to the more boisterous ways of their native land, a long time to get used to this. Back home there was all the hurly-burly associated with the baseball arena, and without an audience shouting "Take him out!", "Who ever told you you could play Bridge, ya big stiff?" and

the like, and throwing pop bottles all the time, the American team was ill at ease and off its game.

Well, as they keep saying, it is only a pastime and these things cannot affect us finally, but any observer who is at all keen-eyed can see that Charles Goren and Lee Hazen are good and sore, as are their colleagues, and there has been some rather acrid criticism of Jeff Glick, the non-playing captain of the American team, for not having seen to it that the playing members had a few of those extra aces up their sleeves which make so much difference in a close chukker.

But let us leave this sad subject, for you will all be wanting to hear how the Steptoe family are doing in their new home in Texas. As you may or may not remember seeing in the papers, they recently moved to a farm outside Waco to get away from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan life and enjoy rural peace. I am happy to say that they are doing fine. Shortly after they settled in a butane gas-tank exploded and set the house on fire, a skunk bit Mr. Steptoe, an opossum bit Mrs. Steptoe, a snake fell into the well, another snake turned up at the breakfast table, Mrs. Steptoe fell off a ladder, one of the cows started jumping over the fences, and the son of the family developed whooping-cough and mumps simultaneously, then got measles and chicken-pox and is now in hospital for a tonsillectomy; but apart from that life has proceeded on an even keel. "Rather dull it's been, really," said Mr. Steptoe to a local reporter.

Good news for beavers comes in a dispatch from Los Angeles, where it has been ruled that "there is nothing inherently repulsive about a Vandyke beard." It seems that a bearded swimming-pool attendant was recently dismissed by his employer because the employer said "Shave that ghastly thing off, it depresses the customers," and the swimming-pool attendant said he would be blown if he would shave it off, and if the customers didn't like it let them eat cake. The State Labour Department held that the employer's order "constituted an unwarranted infringement upon the attendant's privilege as an individual in a free community to present such an appearance as he wished so long as it did not affect his duties

adversely or tend to injure the employer in his business or reputation." And then they went on to say that there is nothing inherently repulsive about a Vandyke beard. All wrong, of course. There is. It looks frightful. A really vintage Vandyke beard, as this one appears to have been, seems to take one into a different and a dreadful world and to destroy one's view of Man as Nature's last word. If Vandyke thought he looked nice he must have been cock-eyed.

Crime continues to be all the go. In the Coronet motel outside Danvers, Mass., there is a notice posted in each bedroom asking clients to clean out their rooms before leaving. A visitor the other day, taking these words to heart, went off with two table-lamps, an inkstand and pen, a wooden mahogany night-table, an ashtray, four sheets, two pillow-cases, two foam rubber pillows, two blankets, two bedspreads, two bath-towels, two tumblers and a shower curtain. It was as near to cleaning out the room as he could get, but it must have been saddening to so conscientious a man to be compelled to leave the beds, the mattresses and a 21-inch console television set.

While on the subject of crime, it is encouraging to note that burglars to-day are beginning to realize that if you wish to succeed in life it is essential to have that well-groomed, modish appearance. One who recently entered the apartment of a Miss Balsam in Chicago, having taken eighteen dollars, asked Miss Balsam for the loan of her electric iron. He plugged it in, pressed his coat and trousers and went out looking as if he were going to appear in that Men of Distinction series which you see advertised in so many American magazines. This man will go far. In fact the police believe he already has.



The New Mayhew—



—A Moving Picture Girl



HOW many of these there are at present existing in London I have been unable to determine, for there is a continual fluctuation in their number. It seems certain that each day fresh "recruits" arrive, while others sink as it were below the surface, or possibly (although I can trace no proven example of this) rise, by some magical process, to more profitable employment in the industry. The girl whose portrait is subjoined I questioned through the good offices of a prosperous cine-electrician of my acquaintance.

She was a plump, fair-haired child of eighteen, and gave her name as Betty. She explained that she was "the Italian type," although a close scrutiny failed to reveal any marked Mediterranean characteristics. She directed my particular attention to her bosom, which seemed rather too extensive to be comfortable, and was evidently braced by an ingenious device within her corsage to give some appearance of solidity.

Her story was not easy to follow, for she had adenoidal tendencies, and used a provincial accent with which I was unfamiliar. I learned that she had been for two years in London, having told her mother (her father being dead) that she had a place as a saleswoman.

"I come down because my friend Angela was doing all right on the modelling, see. Oh, yes, I have always been dead keen on acting, and used to cut out photos of my favourites and stick them up in my bedroom until Ma stopped me. I had thirty-odd quid when I come down, as my friend Angela reckoned she could put me up for a quid a week on a divan. Oh, I was behind a counter from leaving school, but there's no future. No, I haven't never learned acting, but you don't have to on this job I'm on to-day for instance, as all you got to do is walk up and down and not gawp at the cameras. Oh, yes, *sometimes* you have to act, if you get a 'walk-on.' Like, you might have to be going into a building, or be getting off a bus. Then you have to do what the man tells you, and it's proper hard work."

She told me that she lived at present in a four-roomed apartment with two young men, who were engaged in similar employment. Upon my questioning the morality of such an arrangement she replied that she could "look after herself," and that one of the boys, Harold, had abnormal tendencies anyway. They shared the costs of housekeeping, and enjoyed themselves very much, Harold being of a humorous disposition. She had been home once since coming to London. She was not inclined to go again, as she preferred "a bit of life."

"Most times I'm on the dole. Once I saved up close on sixty quid, but it soon went. You have to register with agents, who take ten per cent, or five if the wage is low. They send as many as ten girls after one job, and in that way you waste a lot of time. Why, the jobs are such as being in a crowd, for which you might get only a few quid for a day's work; or playing a 'walk-on' part, with no words. For that I've had as much as eight quid, being at the studio from eight in the morning to five at night. They do not come up often. Other times you might get three days' work together, if something keeps going wrong, and for that I have had twenty quid in a week, and more. I was once three months without earning a penny. That was in the winter time. Living with two others it is easier, for whoever has money will buy tea, or tinned stuffs, etc., and all will share. Like that, I generally manage to

eat something most days, and in my job I must watch my figure [this seemed to me a pathetic piece of boasting], so I don't mind going without now and then.

"On this job to-day I'll get seven guineas, for standing by a counter in an advert film. No, I have no other work 'fixed up,' but hope for some in a fortnight. Special costumes are supplied, otherwise we use our own clothes. You can easy borrow off of a friend, and must help her out another time.

"I hardly ever see the pictures I'm in. Most times they cut your bit out.

"No, I don't think there's anything else I'd rather do, except when there's no money coming in I often think I might like being a secretary, but I don't expect I ever will. I'm not cut out for it. I'm sure I'll get on in the end."

This appeared to me somewhat of a forlorn hope, as the child showed no signs of ability, or even of interest, in the art of acting. What can be done for such casual workers on the fringes of a mighty industry it is not easy to say. Their trade union can ensure that emoluments are reasonable, but there is no possibility of regular work. Despite these facts, which are widely known, there are always half a dozen applicants even for the most trifling engagement. Unfortunately, too, this way of life presents innumerable temptations, and my information is that they are not invariably resisted.

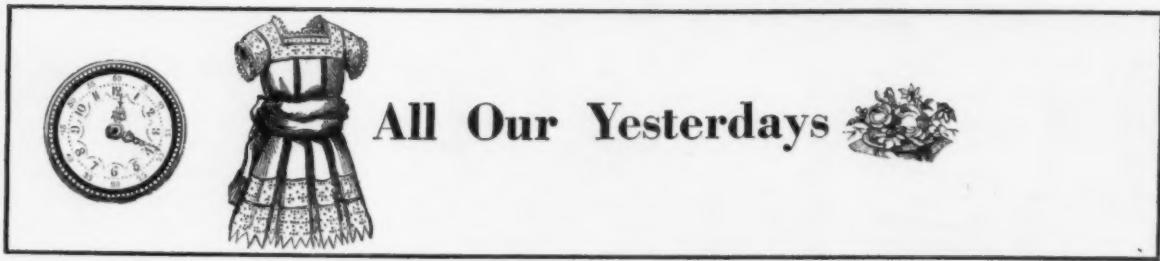
ALEX ATKINSON

Three-Dimensional

"... Sophia Loren (38-24-37) . . ."—Sunday Paper

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day,
Or strive, with metaphor and hard-won rhymes,
To body forth thy loveliness? Ah, nay.
Such verbal gimmicks are behind the times.
Nor shall I praise thy lips, thy cheeks, thy hair,
With artful union of sound and sense,
But, rather, state in simple inches, fair,
The measure of thy chaste circumference.
What swan can match thy snow-white 38?
Or what gazelle thy 24? Great heaven!
What simile could faintly adumbrate
The lithe perfection of thy 37?
Avaunt, each vain device which verse encumbers!
My love I'll lisp, as poets should, in numbers.

E. V. MILNER



smilby.

MEMORIES are always in modern dress; it is the clothes within recalling distance that we totally forget. We remember where we went and what we did, but see ourselves in the fashions of to-day. We recall the songs and snatches, the jibes and jokes, but not the coats and skirts.

An austerity suit of 1945 in the Museum of Costume at Eridge Castle is a suit such as we all must have had at the end of the war. Yet it is seen with a sense of shock. Were our shoulders really so square, our skirts so shamefully short? Nearby, a Schiaparelli dinner dress of 1938 is disappointingly unshocking. Schiaparelli's genius, we used to think, was touched by a happy lunacy; but this dress seems to depend for its individuality merely on a row of buttons fashioned as glass paper-weights. Again, those whose dancing days go back to the tango 'twenties are amazed to see the

limp tattiness of the fabrics they wore: jap silk, georgette, crêpe-de-chine, made all the more tatty by uneven hemlines. One model, *circa* 1925, is made of the shiny "artificial silk" which had just then gained social acceptance through being renamed "rayon." Mrs. Langley Moore, Director of the Museum, assures us that it was a smart dress in a smart woman's wardrobe. In fact, murder will out, she wore it herself.

Contrariwise, our memories of famous people are always correctly dressed in period. Indeed it is entirely by their clothes that some personalities are recalled. Queen Mary! The Busvine tailored coats and skirts, the long umbrella, and the toque of sacred memory; the indomitable low-heeled strap shoes that walked so many exhibition officials off their feet. Queen Mary, of all people, can never have been in two minds about what to wear;

she met each new day, one would have said, a *fait accompli*.

Yet the truth of the matter is that the finished effect was not achieved without considerable royal thought. Every morning the dress Her Majesty decided to wear was put on a dressmaker's "Jane" by a Lady-in-Waiting. Together they would then discuss jewellery and accessories. Several of these Janes of the Royal Household live on in honourable retirement at Marlborough House, in grace-and-favour attics. One of them has now removed to Eridge. There, in the dress she wore at Princess Elizabeth's wedding, Queen Mary is re-created before our loyal eyes; headless, but otherwise in good shape. In fact in perfect shape, because the dummy was made to her exact measurements. These appear to be approximately equal at bust and hips. Strange: for always the impression was that the former dominated the latter.

Three other gowns make up the royal group: an elegantly simple dress of the simply elegant Queen Alexandra; an eloquently widow's weed of Queen Victoria's; and a Queen Mother Hartnell. But these clothes represent isolated personalities, not periods. And it is periods that the visitor to the museum is expected to study. Amongst the early-nineteenth-century fashions we can compare genuine Napoleon Empire with Empire Dior 1956; while in the eighteenth-century room is manifest just how irrational the "Age of Reason" was. Men and women wore wigs for the greater part of their lives; and a barber's apprentice is shown dressing the hair of a young lady who wears a powdering jacket to protect her dress from powder and pomatum. Children, all but the very youngest, were dressed as miniature replicas of their parents. How could the little victims play?

The Edwardian room possesses the



"We did that."

fascination of a period so near and yet so far. Many of the ladies are still alive to-day who wore these splendid gowns to theatres and ballets long ago. And what went on underneath their silken façades can be seen in the glass cases of underclothes and corsets. Here are the stays which disciplined the Edwardian S-bend; here, too, the ones which achieved the Victorian figure-of-eight and earlier silhouettes. The "Lazy Tongs," devices for picking up anything a lady dropped when sitting at needlework, give proof that to bend was very torture. We in our elasticized net and nylon girdles, our boneless wonders, should pity these ladies from our hearts.

Pity, too, their maids: keeping one's lady in perfect condition involved unremitting toil from earliest morning—often to early morning again, if she was in Society. One maid is shown at an ironing table with a pleating board and special irons for lace, ribbon, and gophering work. Another unpacks a vast Saratoga trunk on the return from one of those month-long visits to relations which were such a feature of Victorian

ladies' lives: a way of passing the time while time passed them by. But it would be impertinent to pity the pretty nursemaid out walking with her little charges, wearing a demure print dress and a cap with "Follow-me-my-lads" streamers. Rather spare a thought for her employer who will soon, it is all too clear, have to advertise again for a trustworthy nursemaid with impeccable references.

Yet another maid is helping her mistress to bed: a brass-knobbed bed with crochet coverlet. On the mantel-shelf, above which hangs a sentimental Fred Walker print of children picking primroses, there are the excruciating ornaments of the period: china basket with kittens; a pair of boot vases with artificial flowers. At a dressing-table, another lady is sitting at her toilet with the perfumes and cosmetics of the day in their original *art nouveau* packages. A tiny evening reticule is open to show its tidy contents. What at first appears to be an anachronistic lipstick turns out to be a phial of smelling salts.

Mothers, daughters and aunts, all through the centuries when they had

no interests outside the home to occupy their thoughts, had to make do with pleasure. Social sorties were tremulously anticipated, anxiously prepared for, endlessly talked over. Pleasures, fashions, and frivolities! they may not add up to much in the sum of human happiness, but so much of the heart goes into them that their memory is more moving than that of serious things. "Dear Mrs. Digweed! I cannot bear that she should not be foolishly happy after a ball," wrote Jane Austen to Cassandra. She mocked, but she knew the underlying pathos.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

2 2

Obituary

CRITICS sipping cups of tea
Praise, between their crumpets,
Drunken poets—men who cried
Ha, ha among the strumpets:
It's sad kind words are seldom said
Until a rake is safely dead.

ANTHONY BRODE



"Is it safe without a full-time Chairman?"

Everlastings

Peter and Wendy : J. M. Barrie



I

BOOMSBURY has known many queer characters, but none queerer than the Darlings.

They lived in the corner house of a square. Mr. Darling was a deep one who knew about stocks and shares, and sat on a stool all day. Mrs. Darling drew babies without faces among the cabbages on her shopping list, and then produced three: Wendy, John and Michael. They had heads, but what went into them we shall soon discover.

"I shall have to see about getting a nurse," said Mrs. Darling; and Mr. Darling said "We can't afford it."

But she knew the very one: a quiet, capable Newfoundland who spent most of her time in Kensington Gardens peering into perambulators. Nana came to them for very little. So also did Liza, the maid, who would never—so she declared—see ten again.

All went merrily at No. 14, with Mr. Darling slaving himself to the bone, till that Friday evening—it would be a Friday—when Nana had given them their baths and the cuckoo-clock had struck six.

Mr. Darling needed his tie tying, for they were going out to dinner at No. 27; those terribly clever new people, the Woolfs. Mrs. Darling managed the tie, and then it came out about that boy.



"What boy?" demanded Mr. Darling. "I think," said Mrs. Darling, "it must have been Peter Pan." He had sat at the foot of Wendy's bed playing on his pipes to her.

"Oh, did he?" snorted Mr. Darling. "We'll soon put a stop to that. But how did he get up?" For the nursery was on the top floor.

"He . . . flew."

"Flew?"

"Yes, darling"—or was it Darling?—"but we managed to shoo him off and Nana slammed down the window and caught his shadow."

"Well, why didn't you say so? Let's have a look at it. H'm, nobody I know—the scoundrel! But there may be money in this. I'll have it valued."

"And there was a ball of light, darting about, which he called Tinker Bell . . . Oh, George, what does it mean?"

She put the same question to her neighbour at dinner, a Mr. Lytton Strachey, who looked down his beard at her and said, earnestly, "God knows, madam."

II

As a matter of fact the little stars knew. They had been watching, and as soon as the door of No. 27 closed on the Darlings, they gave a cry and blew



open the nursery window for Peter to fly in.

He found his shadow—carefully rolled up—and was trying to stick it on with soap; but it wouldn't stick, and Wendy had to sew it on for him. Then he jumped about in the wildest glee. To put it with brutal frankness, there never was a cockier boy.

He was a lovely lad, clad in skeleton leaves and the juices that ooze out of trees; but the most entrancing thing about him was that he had all his first teeth. He had gnashed these little pearls at Nana and Mrs. Darling. If you or I or Virginia Woolf had been there we should have seen that he was very like Mrs. Darling's kiss. Wendy could not take her eyes off him.

"I'll give you a kiss if you like," she said; and Peter held out his hand.

"Surely you know what a kiss is?" she asked aghast.

"I shall know when you give it to me," he replied stiffly; and not to hurt his feelings she gave him a thimble.

"Now," said he, "shall I give you a kiss?" And she made herself rather cheap by inclining her head towards him; but he merely dropped an acorn into her hand.

Then he told Wendy how he had run away on the day he was born (this wasn't quite true, it had been a week later), and taken up with the fairies in Kensington Gardens.

"Oh, are there fairies in Kensington Gardens?"

"Quite a lot of them. You know about fairies, of course. When the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of fairies."

There was one in the drawer at the moment, tinkling away like mad.

"Now you may give me a kiss," said Wendy.

"I thought you would want it back," he said a little bitterly, and offered to return the thimble.

"Oh, dear," said the nice Wendy, "I don't mean a kiss, I mean a thimble."

"What's that?"

"It's like this." She kissed him.

"Funny," said Peter gravely. "Now shall I give you a thimble?"

"If you wish to," said Wendy, keeping her head erect this time.

So Peter thimbled her, and the fairy pulled her hair till she screeched, and



Nana down in the yard (where Mr. Darling had foolishly tied her) gave a howl and snapped her chain. The diligent nursemaid ran round to No. 27, pulled the door bell, burst in on the surprised company—

At once, without so much as a word, the Darlings got up and rushed out.

Too late! The lights in the top window were ablaze. Three—no, four—figures were flitting round and round.

Peter had taught them to fly, and away over Tavistock Square they went.

III

Then, night after night in the deserted house, they sat together, Mr. and Mrs. Darling and Nana, holding hands.

"I ought to have been specially careful on a Friday," said Mrs. Darling.

"No, no," Mr. Darling protested, "I alone am responsible. *Mea culpa, mea culpa.*" He had had a classical education. "If only I had not forgotten myself with Nana, and . . ."

And Nana was thinking "I am not worthy," and tears came to her eyes. Mr. Darling passed her his handkerchief. They all wept.

One day he barked and crept into the kennel. "Come out," said Mrs. Darling. But he wouldn't. "Never!" he insisted. "This is the place for me."

So now in the evenings Nana would sit holding Mrs. Darling's hand, and

Mr. Darling would sniff from the kennel.

Every morning it was lifted into a cab, and taken to the office, and brought home at night. Sometimes crowds followed the cab, cheering lustily; charming girls climbed in to get autographs; interviews appeared in the better class of papers.

The Stock Exchange gave him a dinner, and he appeared at the Crystal Palace. Really, he was doing not badly.

"How very extraordinary," remarked Mr. Woolf to Mrs. Woolf, "people are"; and Mrs. Woolf said "Don't you think we might ask them again—to meet Sigmund?"

And on the invitation card she added "Do come in the kennel."

IV

They did, as a matter of fact—her "rubbishy children," as Mrs. Darling called them—come back, all messy with fairy-dust, and chattering about the Neverneverland and the Lost Boys, Pirates and Mermaids, Indians, Tree-Suits, Piccaninnies, and the like. They brought quite a number of Lost Boys with them. Mrs. Darling insisted on adopting them.

She would have adopted Peter too, but he preferred the arrangement by which he would come back every spring-cleaning-time to take Wendy off for a week—if he remembered.

G. W. STONIER



SITTING in the stalls at the Power and the Glory the other night, I fell to reflecting how inevitably dreary are those countries whose citizens are not allowed to wear clerical garments. The surest of all ways to raise a laugh is to take a layman and dress him up in a dog-collar. Politicians these days hardly do anything else. Metaphorical holy orders are Westminster's sole topic of conversation. Sir Edward Boyle, says Mr. Wilson, is the Rasputin of the Treasury. With a gesture of gallant charity Sir Edward hands on the symbol to Mr. Douglas Jay, a more ascetic figure—if asceticism was the especial mark of Rasputin's character—and for good measure throws in a casual canonization of Mr. Aneurin Bevan as "the poor man's St. Thomas Aquinas." In the Lords a real Arch-



"Sir Edward Boyle—the Rasputin of the front bench."—Mr. Harold Wilson

bishop was going all hot under the dog-collar at being told by Lord Balfour that he was "hypocritical." In the midst of all this riot of saints, near saints and failed saints it was almost a relief to hear the robust common sense of Mr. Hervey Rhodes from a back bench, every inch a layman, no swish of the soutane and not even a suspicion of the most minor of orders. No nonsense for him about going to Glastonbury by way of Goodwin Sands. Had he not that very morning seen the Manchester train go by and wondered if it would ever get to Huddersfield? Then Mr. du Cann, from Taunton, thought that it was a much better plan to give old age pensioners old age pensions than to give them tobacco vouchers. And so it is. There was a time when payment in cash rather than payment in kind was thought to mark the whole difference between a free man and a serf.

But it was Mr. Macmillan who swept the floor in the winding-up speech. But what a floor! The Opposition front bench was sparsely inhabited—it was rumoured that there was a dinner-party on—but the knocking of Socialist heads together is something that Mr. Macmillan can do better than anybody, whether the heads happen to be there or not. If only you have read enough Dickens you can always compare anybody to somebody else and get away with it. But, though Mr. Macmillan won on Monday, Mr. Hamilton got one back on him on Tuesday. The public has heard about as much as it is prepared to hear of politicians' denunciations of tax-avoiders. There can be very few citizens who have defrauded the revenue of anything like as much money as the revenue has defrauded all citizens. Post-war credits were borrowed by the Government from the citizen during the war on the promise that they would be

repaid after the war. Not a word was said about their being repaid in a pound that would purchase enormously less than it purchased at the time of the loan. Mr. Hamilton's suggestion that the holders of post-war credits should be given premium bonds may not have been very relevant, but something must be done to remedy this gigantic swindle.

There is one great mystery about Bernard Shaw's will which Mr. Pitman's question did not clear up. Bernard Shaw thought that with a few letters we should all be able to write much more quickly and save a lot of time. What we would save the time for was not very clear. But *chacun à son goût*. Yet what is to stop those who enjoy writing digammas from just sitting down and writing digammas till the cows come home? How does the money come in? Why is it necessary to devote a million



"Mr. Bevan—the poor man's St. Thomas Aquinas."—Sir Edward Boyle

pounds to the Society for Protection of Digammas? And who is going to get the million pounds?

Tuesday was Visitors' Day and the Visitors were clearly in no mind to have their legs pulled. Was that really Sir Winston Churchill sitting down there? or was it just a cardboard Effigy made up to look like him and to make fools of them? They were not to be taken in as easily as all that, and anyway by Mr. Vane's criticisms of rural transport they were not amused. So, to be on the safe side, they went off to Clean Air and the House of Lords. Perhaps the Visitors could hardly be expected to show much interest in Mr. Vane and rural transport, but as a matter of fact Mr. Vane made a very good job of it. He blamed the Transport Commission's bad publicity. In other countries railway officials make it their business to go out and get business—even to encourage production in order that there may be more business. In Britain they are content to keep P.R.O.s whose business is to explain that what is wrong is not as wrong as it seems to be.

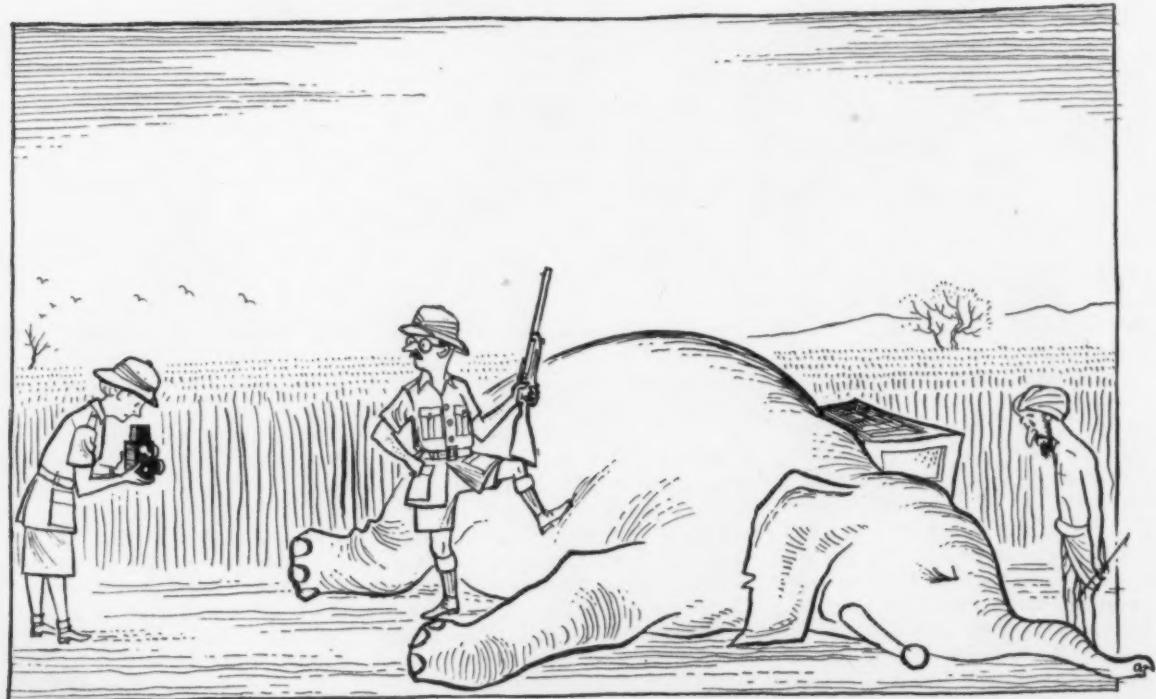
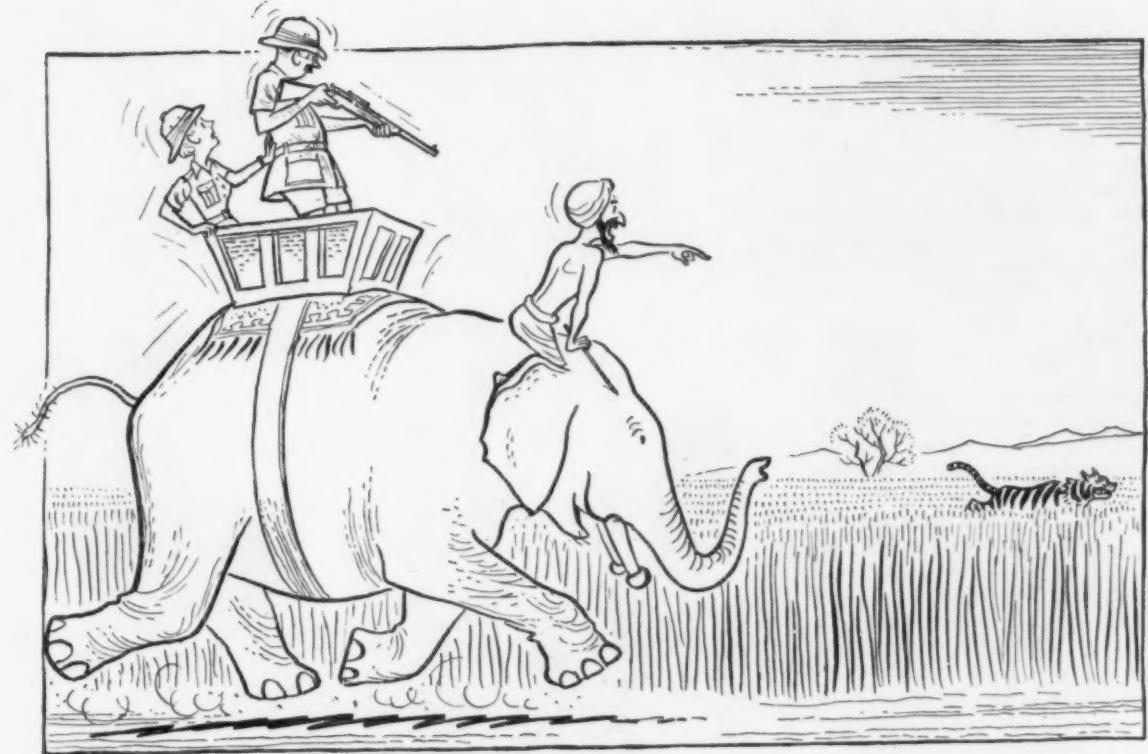
The first business after questions on Wednesday was a vote on the tobacco-tax. The Socialists had put out a three-line whip for it. There were no rumours of dissensions in their ranks. Yet when the division came they were defeated—no one seems to know exactly why—by 81. Then the House turned to the death penalty, and since almost all Socialists are abolitionists, a quick-thinking retentionist would have reached the conclusion that by some accident a number of his opponents were out of the House and have forced a division as quickly as possible. It fell to Mr. Turner-Samuels to move the first retentionist amendment—an amendment so wide that, had it been carried, it would virtually have killed the bill. Had Mr. Turner-Samuels been astute enough to move the amendment in a few sentences and get a division quickly he might well have won. As he clearly did not understand his own amendment, it was immaterial to the intrinsic merits whether his speech was long or short. But quickness of thought was not one of the gifts which were found when a tremulant stork first deposited Mr. Turner-Samuels in his waiting cradle. Instead he insisted on making an interminable speech, much of it most doubtfully in order. Thanks to his



opening innings the debate spun out till half-past six. By that time the abolitionists had got back to the House, and even many who were not abolitionists had no great enthusiasm to establish a sort of Premium Bonds Gallows, as every speaker differed from every other speaker in his interpretation of who would be hanged if the amendment was passed. So when it came to the division Mr. Turner-Samuels' amendment went down by 20. If abolition should ever get to the Statute Book, abolitionists should set up, somewhere between the statues of Richard I and Oliver Cromwell, a statue of Mr. Turner-Samuels to whom their cause owes so much.

For the rest of a dull day the most interesting debate was on Mr. Simon's amendment for the introduction into England of the Scottish doctrine of diminished responsibility—nothing directly to do with hanging but none the worse for that. One reads the phrases about "not knowing the nature and quality of his act," "unable to distinguish between right and wrong," "not knowing that his action was wrong" with which the interpretation of the

McNaughten Rules is peppered. They sound exactly like phrases out of a textbook by a modern Oxford philosophy don explaining his own metaphysical position. Roughly and by and large to-day the tests by which the courts decide whether a defendant is insane or not are the same as the tests by which Oxford dons decide whether a candidate should be elected a Fellow of his College. Have we not perhaps here all ready to hand those intermediate buildings—half-way between a lunatic asylum and prison—which Mr. Lloyd George says that we need if all murderers are to be reprieved? It may be said—and there is something in it—that, if one wants a rough-and-ready test, it is as good as any other, and indeed it would simplify at least the administration of the law if we just baldly said that those of us who are dons are insane and those of us who are not dons are sane. I do not know that things would then be much worse than they are at present, but let us hope that, whatever may happen about abolition, Mr. Simon will win the day in making them a great deal better. CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



Brockbank



Big Business—Small Investors

INFLATION has been kind to the Stock Exchange. Every year the number of small investors grows. Scared stiff of leaving their residual pounds (residual, that is, after bulldozing taxation) to rot away beneath the deep deposits of the great institutions, they take a long anxious look at the financial columns of the dailies, consult their bank manager and nibble at the "blue chips." By doing so they do not, alas, achieve peace of mind: the quoted variations in share prices now plague them almost as shatteringly as did the daily reminders of inflation, but they do at least know that their money has a chance of retaining its purchasing power.

It used to be said that stock market investment was a mug's game for the little man, that the risks of holding a slim portfolio far exceeded the promise of capital appreciation and goodly yields, but inflation of the prevailing order has made nonsense of this dictum. The crafty ones these days are those who live beyond their means; realists are people who spend exactly what they earn; and the prudent are men who decide before it is too late that intelligent investment is *not* a mug's game.

The vast increase in the financial franchise has created new problems for industry. Ordinary shareholders are supposed to control the management and direction of business enterprises: through their votes, their hawk-eyed analysis of financial returns and their outspoken comments at annual general meetings they are supposed to keep company affairs in good order, directors on their toes, take-over bidders at bay, and dividends reasonably attractive. In the days of coffee-house finance all this was possible. A handful of large and discerning investors was in fact able to retain effective control over management and keep equity interest dominant in all matters of policy. But what happens to-day? The small shareholder

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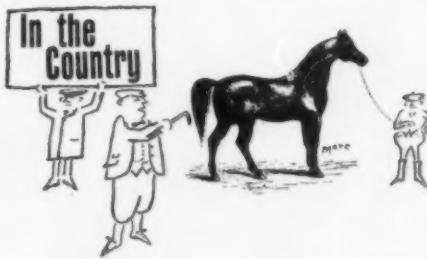
has neither the time nor inclination to busy himself with the affairs of the companies he owns. Businesses have become so vast that it is beyond the wit of all but the full-time specialist to comment ably upon their proceedings. Here is Sir Alexander Fleck's Imperial Chemicals with assets of £400 millions, Lord Heyworth's Unilever worth £250 millions, Sir Robert Sinclair's Imperial Tobacco worth £170 millions; here are the great industrial empires of Sir Eric Bowater, Sir Leonard Lord, Sir Patrick Hennessy, Lord Chandos, Harold Samuel, Harold Drayton and five hundred more businesses worth at least £2,500,000 apiece. How can the humble part-owner of these neotechnic mammoths hope to make effective use of his right to vote?

The short answer is of course that he doesn't. His ballot papers go into the

waste-paper basket, and not even a free binge at company's expense can induce him to attend the annual general meeting.

Does it matter? Does it matter that the shareholder's voice in industry is becoming that of the managers of the great institutional investors, the men from the "Pru" and the controllers of pension, trade union and Co-operative funds? Does it matter that voteless equities are proliferating, that non-voting shares in such companies as Pye, Carreras, Lyons, and Marks & Spencer should outnumber voting shares? Perhaps not. These developments seem to me to be the logical outcome of the rise of big business and the small investor. But they do make nonsense of the more highfalutin propaganda put out in defence of our "financial democracy."

MAMMON



A Poor Prospect

THE Annual Price Review which was made about a month ago and fixes how much money the producers of milk and bacon can afford to lose during the following year is certainly causing some irritation, if not actual distress, among small farmers. And in England we are all small farmers: the average holding is no more than sixty acres.

A glance at the advertisement columns of the *Country Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Lady* or *Country Life* tells its own tale of pinched gentility. There are no "uncles" in Shepton Mallet, Cheltenham or Thame: the sign of the three brass balls is a convenience we are denied. What can we do therefore but hock or, as we say politely, "part with" what we do not want to somebody who needs it even less? Of course it's not always easy to word these appeals without our financial urgency somewhat upsetting our sense of dignity. So we have to compromise:

"Gentlewoman in temporary financial difficulties may part with her electric lawn mower if assured a good home; £20, no offers. Box —."

It cannot be that she is concerned with the affection with which her gadget will be received, and so one must assume what is erroneously called the worst—that this gentlewoman has finally decided to throw gentility to the winds and has gone to rough it in sin with the gentleman of the next advertisement in the same column:

"Electric razor as new, no longer needed, £8. Colonel —, The Old Cottage, —."

Whatever the relationship between these two impecunious people is, it seems safe to assume that, wherever they've gone to ground, they have become rather unplugged, but let us hope that there is some voltage between them.

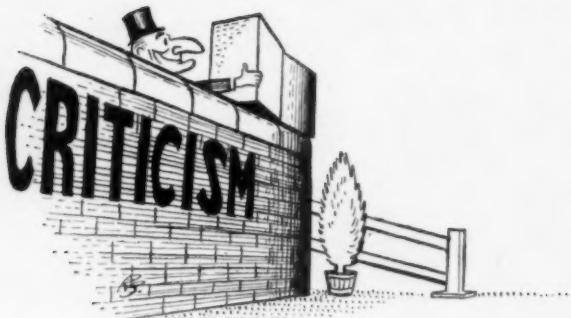
Then follow seven or eight agonized appeals, all from Wiltshire, where a Captain, ex-Indian Army, wishes to dispose of his golf clubs, and a country vicar can be persuaded to part with his 1911 edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, rice paper, uncut . . . the rest follows a similar pattern.

But it is Shropshire which provides the real *cri de cœur*:

"Titled Lady will part with her double bed, V spring mattress, bought 1952, quite unused. Box —."

How can we say that England prospers when we read such appeals as that? It is a case of poverty indeed.

RONALD DUNCAN



BOOKING OFFICE

Dylan Plain

Dylan Thomas in America. John Malcolm Brinnin. Dent, 18/-

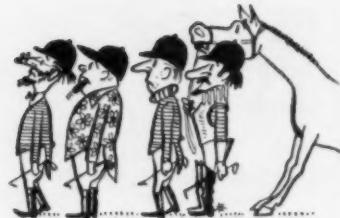
THE Americans, it must be admitted, have been at pains to build up the "drunk"—especially the literary "drunk"—as a figure of romance. You may get strongish whiffs of alcohol from time to time in Continental writers like Dostoevsky or Zola; but the real *mystique* of getting drunk for the sake of getting drunk belongs essentially to the literature of the United States. It is no doubt true that in the contemporary world dipomania is the commonest expression of a personality at war with itself; and, as such, should receive proper attention in books. But it is also undeniable that in real life people who drink more than they can hold can become wearisome in the extreme.

However, anything suffered in the past from that ritualistic and insatiably violent devotion to the bottle that occasionally puts a particular strain on transatlantic friendships can now be considered a settled account. Dylan Thomas, as representative of our own tight little island, saw to that. If the Americans have ever boasted too freely their endemic literary alcoholics, they met in him an exotic example hard to surpass. The pages of Mr. John Brinnin's absorbing book reveal every facet of the picture.

If I may myself be permitted a brief personal reminiscence of the subject, I ran across Dylan Thomas two or three times not very long after his first volume had been published. He came to dine. We talked again at the Surrealist Exhibition of 1935, when I remember a pungent remark of his regarding a young lady who arrived there wearing a kind of fencing mask made of roses and carrying a false leg. In those days he seemed a modest, witty, gnome-like little creature, still fresh from "the high hill of Wales,"

and said—with one lung—to have only a year or two to live. Obviously greatly gifted, he did not drink noticeably more than anyone else.

I never encountered him in that later period when he had achieved a public reputation of the rather unornamental kind which can only be a handicap to any writer's work. That stage had been in existence for some time when the present story opens.



often—perhaps even usually—admirably executed and greatly enjoyed. There was also the ever-present fear—too frequently justified—that something would go badly wrong. Mr. Brinnin gives his own convincing theories as to Dylan Thomas's torturing anxieties that caused him sometimes to behave so atrociously.

Could the situation at any stage have been improved? Mr. Brinnin, I suspect, thinks there was never anything to be done. No doubt this is true. One has only to imagine Swinburne with a job in the B.B.C., or Beddoes lecturing in New England, to see that we have not yet solved the problem of how to deal with our poets. It was not a question of recognition; no one could reasonably have expected more public recognition than Dylan Thomas received. It was not a question of money; he was earning three times the stipend of Mr. Brinnin himself, a don at an American university. Mr. Brinnin, yielding nothing to his own personal friendship and admiration for the poetry, suggests that the interior machinery was lacking for transforming an early lyricism into a solid critical approach—the traditional progress of the poet. Dylan Thomas, he thinks, was not sufficiently interested in ideas. It was the knowledge of this weakness in his own intellectual equipment that he could never forget.

The rather facile wave of emotionalism at the time of Dylan Thomas's death among persons, many of them, not particularly notable for their everyday interest in art and letters, has cast an aura of journalism over the poet which somewhat obscures the field of serious criticism. That he was in a high class of his kind seems undeniable. The determinedly baroque language of much of his poetry becomes at times a trifle strained in spite of its brilliance—his simplicity is rare, but always delightful. We owe him at least a considerable debt for breaking free from the half-baked political pedantries of his immediate predecessors.



Mr. Brinnin had long been an admirer of Dylan Thomas's poetry, although they had never met until 1950, at Idlewild Airport, after Mr. Brinnin had arranged for Dylan Thomas a reading tour throughout the universities of America. This was followed by three subsequent tours; the last culminating in the poet's death.

It is the great merit of Mr. Brinnin's book that he produces a human and sympathetic portrait without ever attempting in the smallest degree to modify the horror of the various American tours; or, indeed, the horror of the author's own visit to this country. Clearly Dylan Thomas's readings were

Mr. Brinnin's book will no doubt be attacked for its plain speaking. It can hardly fail to present a painful side to many who were close to the poet. I like its realism. It certainly proves that, among Dylan Thomas's American hosts, the Biddles can take it.

ANTHONY POWELL

Defeat Into Victory. Field-Marshal Sir William Slim. *Cassell, 25/-*

"My generals," observes Field-Marshal Slim after describing how he came upon the G.O.C. 19th Division singing hymns with some Assamese soldiers after a victory, "had character." Sometimes, as with Stilwell and Wingate, the character was frankly difficult. Stilwell, a rude, intransigent man, was won over in the end: "I've been a good subordinate to you," he said. Wingate, suffering the disadvantage of divine inspiration, also gave way, but not with good grace; when a really terrifying decision was to be made, such as the continuation of the second Chindit expedition after the discovery of the blocking of "Piccadilly," he let Slim make it and then gave him a "long, bitter look" when it seemed to have been wrong.

Slim's own character gleams from every page of his story of the Burmese campaigns, perhaps nowhere better than in the "afterthoughts" of the last chapter, in which the blend of military traditionalism and imagination that enabled him to fight this "soldiers' war" so skilfully is well displayed. One could do with a whole bookful of such reflections. In the meantime, at any rate, there is this wholly admirable book of autobiography, from which the reason for "Uncle Bill's" universal esteem in the Fourteenth Army is clearly to be seen.

B. A. Y.

Mamma. Diana Tutton. *Constable, 13/6*

This is another attempt, not quite so successful as *Guard Your Daughters*, to use the "nice novel for ladies" as the form in which to express a view of contemporary life that is original and disturbing. When this kind of hybrid is

successful it can produce extraordinary effects, as Auden sometimes does with his adaptations of street ballads and music-hall songs. The danger is that the novel may not get away from its starting level.

This is an enjoyable mother-daughter-son-in-law triangle set in a world of doing the flowers and funny chaps and efficient daughters with charmingly inefficient mums; but the sharpness that distinguishes the early chapters dies away, the characters seem to slump back into the types of which they were at first "sports," and what looked like combining the rasp of Miss E. Arnot Robertson's early novels with Miss Enid Bagnold's intense perception of physical process ends in a bland mixture of simple sentiment and humour. However, it remains an elegant "light" novel throughout.

R. G. G. P.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Tennessee Williams. *Secker and Warburg, 12/6*

The Mulberry Bush. Angus Wilson. *Secker and Warburg, 10/6*

Tennessee Williams' play, which has up-ended New York, contains most of his favourite elements—frayed nerves, nostalgia, sexual frustration, the bottle in a big way and a truck-driver's vocabulary; but this time they are welded into a dramatic form which is emotionally true and which, in passages of fine insight, succeeds in the delicate exploration of the inability, at the last ditch, of one human being to communicate with another. In a preface Mr. Williams explains this special aim, and the reader is given the chance to choose between the original third act and the one written for Broadway.

Angus Wilson has revised *The Mulberry Bush* since publication, but even as printed it gives welcome proof that he is learning to transfer to the stage his gifts for character and dialogue. The people of his play (which covers three generations) dare—in the main—to be more normal than those in his novels. They talk wittily and, for the most part, they talk to the point.

E. O. D. K.

The Blunderer. Patricia Highsmith. *Cresset Press, 15/-*

American writers, in their endless exploration of violence, can produce thrillers and novels about crime without any of the artificiality and strain that often show in British attempts to get beyond an inquiry into the identity of the criminal. The neat plot becomes a living, growing container of fear. This ingenious successor to the classic *Strangers on a Train* has the grip on surface attention of top-line entertainment and also makes a cold clutch at the reader's deeper security. The relationship of the principal characters is psychologically convincing, though it would not seem so in a summary of the story.

I found it difficult to decide whether



"I've got a little tax accountant round the corner who's a veritable jewel."

the acceptance of the police and press as menaces, as much outside the control of the individual as hurricanes or mambas, was simply straightforward description of the facts of American life or satirical. The hysterical behaviour of the cop who smashes open the truth and creates more violence does rather strain the credulity of the British reader.

R. G. G. P.

AT THE PLAY

South Sea Bubble
(LYRIC)

Marie Tudor—Don Juan—Le Triomphe de l'Amour (PALACE)
The Merchant of Venice
(STRATFORD-ON-AVON)
Commemoration Ball (PICCADILLY)

IF Shaw had written *South Sea Bubble* it would have been an easy guess that the play would hinge on the political division between the Governor of the Samolan Islands, a British possession in the Pacific, and the elder statesman of the native Conservatives. This is an amusing clash, because the Governor is a thick-headed idealist of leftist leaning and Punalo Alani an extremely shrewd reactionary as well as a fervent Old Etonian; and it is the only theme that emerges from a first act in which, on the veranda of Government House, we merely meet a lot of people, some of whom talk brightly, while others just drink.

But having hit on this promising inversion of the current pattern, Noël Coward declines to discuss it further, instead finding his situation in a silly escapade of the Governor's wife with Punalo's son, a dashing young amanuensis who leads his father's party in resisting the dubious benefits of democracy. She has been told by her husband to try charm on this stubborn opponent; and after walking him round the garden is so infuriated by the disapproval of an official's wife that she agrees to go off with him to a party on the other side of the island. Much later, trapped in his beach hut, she hits him over the head with a bottle and manages to get back,



Solution to last week's crossword

leaving behind her a seething trail of clues.

As a comic situation this has not been very fruitful. Surely, we feel, Mr. COWARD must have something electric up his sleeve for his third act. But no. Just as things inevitably are looking dark for the home side, threatened by the wily old gentleman with political blackmail, his son returns from hospital in a mood of old-fashioned chivalry and penitence. And so the bubble dissolves, in yet another round of cocktails.

All this makes a very slight play about rather dull people—the two native politicians excepted. It stands or falls on the lightness of its dialogue, and here it is roughly in the position of the Tower of Pisa. There are patches of crisp brilliance, and also patches of the kind of minor chatter in which Mr. COWARD continues his lifelong habit of making little jokes about places which may sound fusty or imperialistic—in this case, Bangalore, Earl's Court, San Remo, Margate, Brighton, Darjeeling, Uxbridge and Huddersfield.

So far as is humanly possible the bubble is kept airborne, by a cast deserving something either funnier or more interesting. Eton should be proud of ALAN WEBB, incredibly disguised and vocally fascinating, and RONALD LEWIS gives the young native abundant vitality. VIVIEN LEIGH's cool poise and IAN HUNTER's solid Britishness make for authentic Excellencies, JOYCE CAREY

achieves Poona-ism without burlesque, and as a famous writer, standing by as acid Chorus, ARTHUR MACRAE puts his own discreet polish on most of the best lines.

The three-week visit (ending on May 5th) of the Théâtre National Populaire has proved of interest in illustrating both JEAN VILAR's methods of production and French styles of acting seldom seen in London. In the title-part of VICTOR HUGO's *Marie Tudor*, for instance, MARIA CASARES' study of a woman eaten up by love and jealousy reaches pathological intensity. The actress seems not to be acting but consumed by the bitterness of the Queen's passion. HUGO's play, which bends history to romantic tragedy, is more dramatic than I expected, and the production, with an almost bare stage, bold strokes of light and shade, and sombre effects of sound and music, makes it surprisingly exciting.

In DANIEL SORANO, MOLIÈRE's *Don Juan* finds a wonderfully sympathetic Sganarelle, the cowardly but lovable valet. Again the play is simply and powerfully staged—the Commander's statue has a fearful majesty—but it loses some point in M. VILAR's *Don Juan*, polished but apparently bored by the effort of living up to his reputation. For the third play, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, by MARIVAUX, LEON GISCHIA has designed a delightful garden set round a classic folly. All the

dresses and décor for the three productions are by him, and excellent. I have seen MARIVAUX better done, and Mlle. CASARES brings only a limited sparkle to the leading part, but M. VILAR scores as an eccentric philosopher and CATHERINE LE COUEY as his unhappy sister. I shall remember for a long time the wildly funny antic gardener by GEORGES WILSON. He and DANIEL SORANO and MONIQUE CHAUMETTE, an extremely useful trio, appear in all the plays.

We can learn from these distinguished visitors from Paris, but chiefly from M. VILAR's intrepid sense of staging, and from his company's enviable diction.

From Stratford, much happier news. *The Merchant of Venice*, easily sonorous and heavy, has been deftly treated by MARGARET WEBSTER, while ALAN TAGG has gone out of his way to teach the travel posters their job, with a Venice airily fantastical and full of pleasing dresses, and a Belmont at which no romantic ending could possibly grumble. Miss WEBSTER has done wonders in lightening and sharpening. For once the casket scene takes life; the lovers are actually in love; and though the trial suffers a little from the fact that MARGARET JOHNSTON, a most delicate actress, has to assume an alien resolution, this is a small price to pay for such a witty and charming Portia. The Venetians all ring pretty true—BASIL HOSKINS's Bassanio, ANTHONY NICHOLLS's Antonio, PRUNELLA SCALES's Nerissa and JEANNETTE STERKE's Jessica are good—with the exception, I am sorry to say, of EMILYN WILLIAMS's Shylock. One expected great things, and for a few minutes they seemed to be arriving; then the monotony of too elaborate a conception began to take its toll. Mannerisms, no less distracting for being carefully calculated, are so thick on this Shylock that little feeling gets through. In a mandarin make-up even his eyes are invisible.

Everything that *Commemoration Ball* tries to do, *Charley's Aunt* did very much better.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Chalk Garden (Haymarket—25/4/56), a light mystery beautifully acted. *The Waltz of the Toreadors* (Criterion—14/3/56), dazzling Anouilh. *The Rivals* (Saville—7/3/56), a fine production.

ERIC KEOWN



Hali Alani—RONALD LEWIS

Lady Alexandra Shattock—VIVIEN LEIGH

AT THE GALLERY A Late Arrival

THE life work, or at least a proportion of it, of a fine painter of the late Impressionist epoch has been saved from oblivion. Sold lately in bundles by auction in Paris, some twenty of the

canvases of the late Rodric O'Conor (1860—1940) now fill the upper rooms of the Roland, Delbanco and Browne Galleries in Cork Street; the ground floor being occupied by a worthy group of works by Sir Matthew Smith, a friend of the former painter. The two artists appear to have some temperamental affinity. Both belong to the genus painter rather than draughtsman, that is they see nature in terms of mass rather than sharply defined contour, and both have a taste for rather violent oppositions of colour. Like Matthew Smith, O'Conor's influences and training were largely French, and he lived most of his grown-up life in France and became acquainted with Gauguin while in Brittany.

A *rentier*, he had a retiring disposition and may well have been influenced by the fate of some of the earlier impressionists summed up by Degas: "In my day no one ever arrived." As such he was unattracted by the possible rewards of exhibition; and so the unusual opportunity presents itself to us of being able to assess the work of a mature painter, unswayed, for the moment, by a barrage of propaganda or the persuasive arts of picture brokers. Was O'Conor as great as the best artists in his category? In one respect I think not. Given he had vitality, a sense of light, richness of quality and considerable understanding of colour, only occasionally did his canvas become one of those really joyous bouquets of colour which Bonnard (for instance, Mr. Noël Coward's Street Scene lately at Sotheby's), Vuillard, Utrillo, and Matthew Smith himself produce with such happy frequency. Apart from that we have everything to be grateful for in his survival. (Closes May 19.)

ADRIAN DAINTREY



AT THE PICTURES

A Kiss Before Dying
Carousel

Of this week's lot, the one I enjoyed most was the one I had thought least promising, the one that had least publicity and no well-known names (except that of the director of photography, LUCIEN BALLARD) among the technical credits: *A Kiss Before Dying* (Director: GERD OSWALD). This is a cracking good murder-and-suspense melodrama of the kind that shows you the murderer's activities from the first suggestion of his motive, the suspense and interest coming partly from watching him perpetually on the edge of being found out, partly from the danger that he may proceed to murder other more sympathetic characters to avoid discovery, and partly, in this instance, from the progress of someone's actual investigation of the puzzle on suspicion.

There is no suspicion at all for some time: this is one of those "perfect crimes," and it is fascinating to watch



(A Kiss Before Dying)

Bud Corliss—ROBERT WAGNER

the murderer's care to cover all his tracks as he does his best to make it perfect. The scene is an American university and most of the personages of the story are in some way connected with it. The victim and the murderer are students, and the friendly man who helps the victim's sister to collect evidence afterwards is a "part-time professor," as well as usefully being the nephew of the local chief of police. It is the detail of the episodes, together with the fact that the nature of the story makes one concentrate on it (for such a story depends on small details, as any whodunit fan knows), that gives the piece its power: it is gripping as a whole, but each individual scene is strongly interesting. The texture is close, the mixture is rich; I found this one of those rare films that seem enjoyably, not tediously, longer than they really are.

The players concerned are not very big names either: ROBERT WAGNER as the young murderer is good enough (MARY ASTOR has a nice "bit" part as his rather silly mother) and so are the others, but it is really a script-writer's (LAWRENCE ROMAN, from the novel by IRA LEVIN), director's and photographer's picture. It is no great work of art, it is not profound or even memorable, but it does what it sets out to do very well indeed. I would willingly see it again.

The one that has had all the publicity this time is *Carousel* (Director: HENRY KING), which comes to an audience already fond of the tunes and prepared to delight in an immensely glorified version of RODGERS and HAMMERSTEIN'S

stage musical. It is glorified by, among other things, "CinemaScope 55," the latest improved CinemaScope process, and certainly some of the visual effects—notably the wide-ranging views of the sea, the seashore and all the boats, where the fresh air of Maine can almost be felt blowing through the auditorium—are magnificent; but most of the time it remains in grain a stage show, with the characters, even when we see only a few of them together, in the postures and groupings that suggest the stage.

Here the strength of the thing is in the music, and in the energy, the sheer vitality with which everybody puts it over. The story, even though it was originally that of a straight play (MOLNAR's *Liliom*), is not important: one doesn't really care about the emotions of these people, or why they do what they do. Here are two hours and nine minutes—perhaps a bit too much—of rich, sweet, stimulating, but essentially momentary entertainment.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The big news in London is of course *The Swan*, but FRANK SINATRA's Western, *Johnny Concho*, is a better film. A little programme quite worth seeking out is a group of new U.P.A. cartoons, mostly Magoo, at the Cameo. *Race for Life* (11/4/56), *The African Lion* (11/4/56) and *The Harder They Fall* (18/4/56) continue.

None of the new releases was noticed at length here, though *1984* got an irritated sentence (28/3/56). *The Feminine Touch* is a pleasant, rather too radiant story about young nurses.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR TV in 3-D

THERE was a time when I regarded television as a potentially powerful instrument of propaganda for good taste and good design. It seemed to me that this new window on the world would lead us gradually, by example rather than by ratiocination, towards an appreciation of formal and patterned excellence in such things as furniture, fabrics, pottery, lettering and décor. If people looked in nightly upon a studio scene vetted for taste by experts in industrial design it was unlikely, I argued, that they could avoid its improving influence. We should become a nation of Bauhaus disciples, of Herbert Read and Gordon Russells.

Well, I was wildly out in my reckoning. Television, I regret to say, does very little for industrial design—no more than the cinema and the theatre.

Consider the aesthetic content of viewing sessions. We begin on a wonderful note, with Abram Gomes's precise and exquisite mobile-type frontispiece, a device that hints at riches to come. We then see the "News" and "Highlight," two programmes depicted in terms of head-and-shoulder close-ups and un-demonstrative wallpaper backcloths. There follows a serial story, something imported from America or something like "The Grove Family." The American film uses conventional stage props, an overstuffed settee, French windows, a standing lamp, sundry draperies and heterogeneous knick-knacks: the Groves domesticate in an aura of lower middle-class respectability and a living-room of left-overs from a Victorian jumble sale.

Next, variety. Venetian blinds, filmy



[The Brains Trust]
DR. JULIAN HUXLEY ALAN BULLOCK LORD DAVID CECIL

drapes, bandsmen arranged in the squares of a vertical chess board, soloists mounted on wedding-cake rostrums and lush songsters mincing down endless steps and across acres of glossy lino. A panel game, with the celebrities pinned like moths against a flashy milk bar. "The Brains Trust," with an artificial log fire, a grandfather clock and the chintzy atmosphere of Shaw's Corner. Next, a play and stage props as before. Indifferent lettering, more close-ups and an amiable Good night.

I asked my fellow-viewers whether any item of industrial design had caught their eye. Yes, there was a jolly decent hat-rack in the serial "My Friend Charles" (otherwise a baffling rag-bag of detective fiction and suspended suspense); Richard Dimbleby, someone seemed to remember, sat at rather a posh desk in "Panorama," and there were occasional glimpses in programmes for women of a worthy Gordon Russell sideboard. As for the I.T.A., my collaborators could recall only

oak-panelled rooms, more lengths of Venetian blind and bits of fumed oak.

Design in television is of course gravely handicapped by the colour bar. Working in black-and-white the cameras can seldom give us more than a rough outline of the *mise en scène*, and all accents of tone that might lead the eye away from the performers have to be eliminated. Moreover, the very fact that the viewer is chiefly interested in faces, mouths and dress tends to convert inanimate portions of the screen into a waste of chiaroscuro.

All the same I am convinced that designers could do more to suggest appropriate atmosphere by the employment of seemly three-dimensional props. Well-designed furni-

ture and fabrics—adequately lighted—would help to enrich the texture of the screen and enable producers to ration themselves in the use of close-ups without any sacrifice of pictorial appeal. The TV screen is unbearably shallow in programme after programme: to achieve depth and dimension it is necessary to feed the cameras with interior designs capable of arresting the attention and resting the eye.

I regard it as a hopeful sign that the B.B.C. has recently strengthened its design policy by calling in more extra-mural practitioners. It should not be beyond the powers of the D.R.U. (Design Research Unit) team and other outside bodies to revolutionize the art of visual TV presentation. Misha Black's designs for the recent performance of the Spanish ballet group—simple exercises in the use of curve and straight-edge, light and shade—were a promising experiment.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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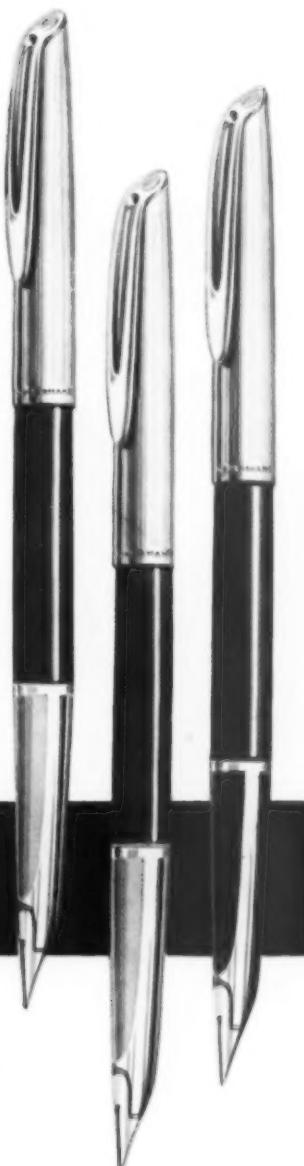
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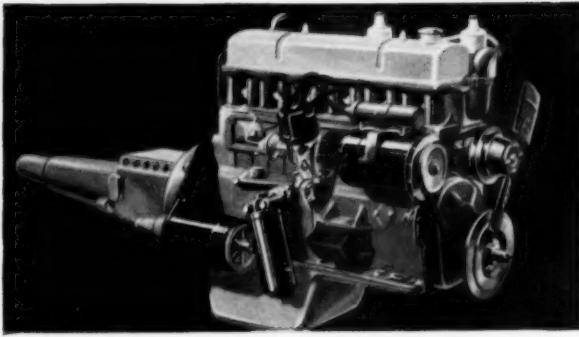
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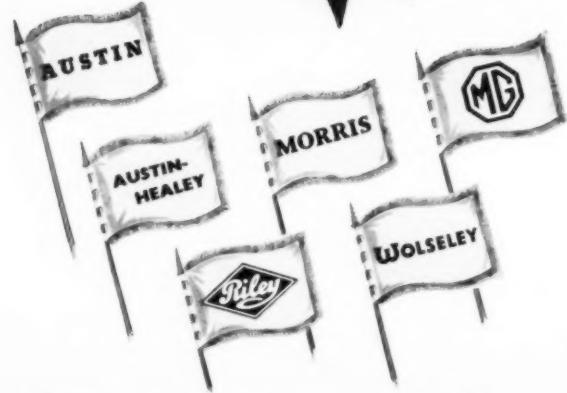
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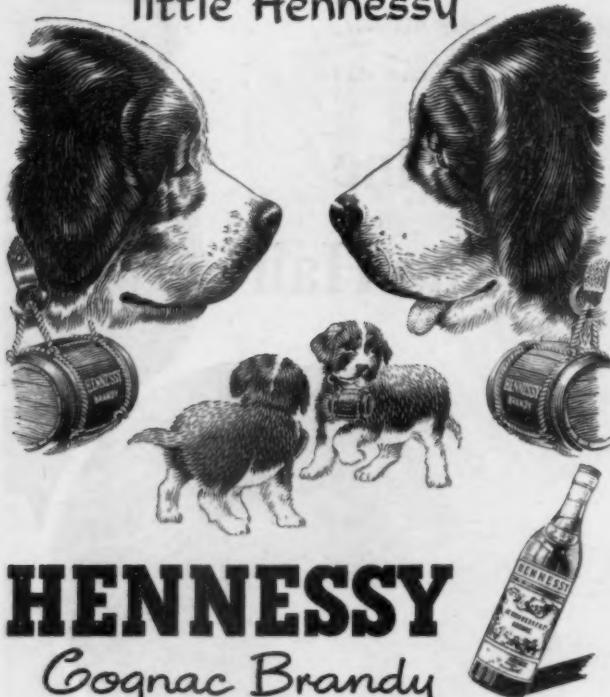
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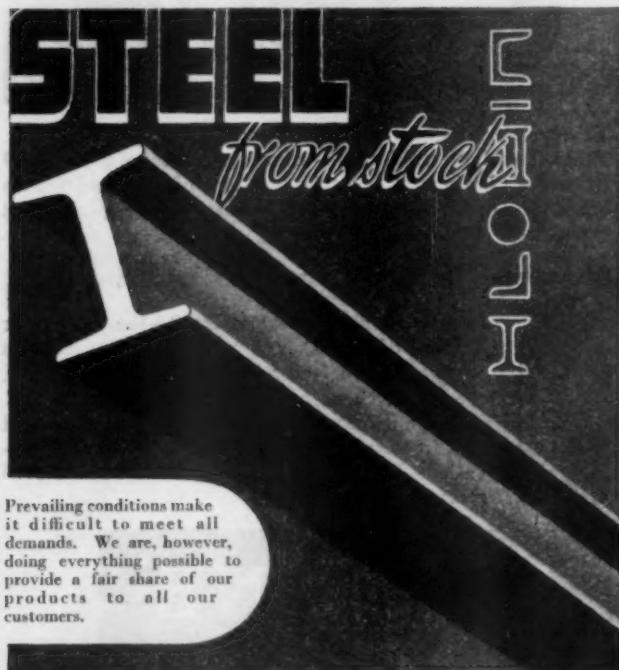
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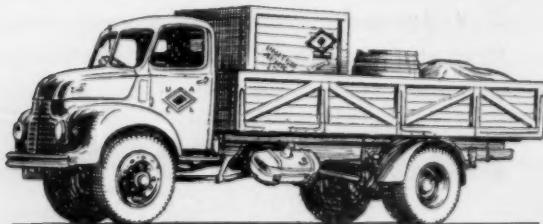
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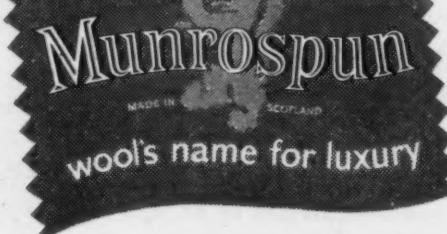
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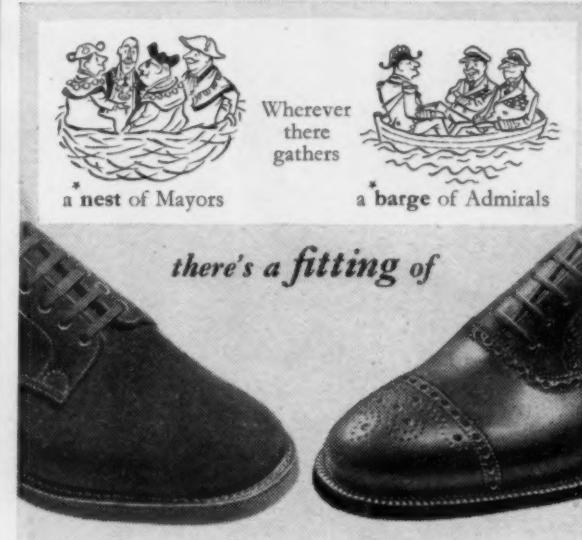
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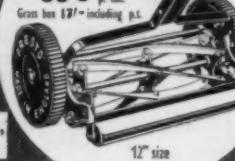
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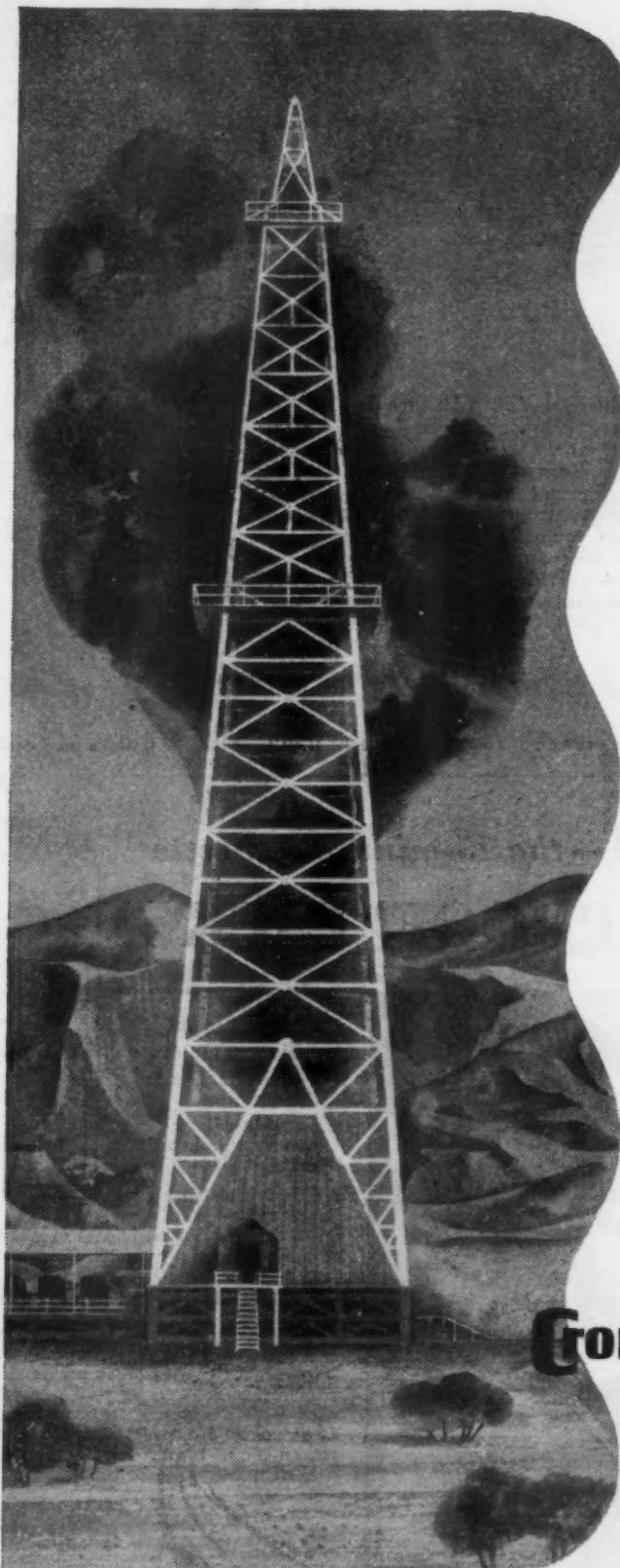


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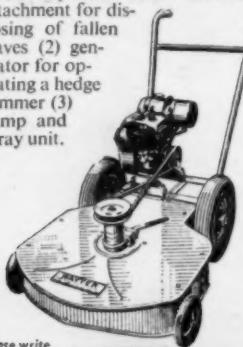
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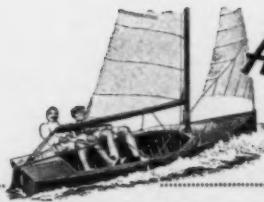
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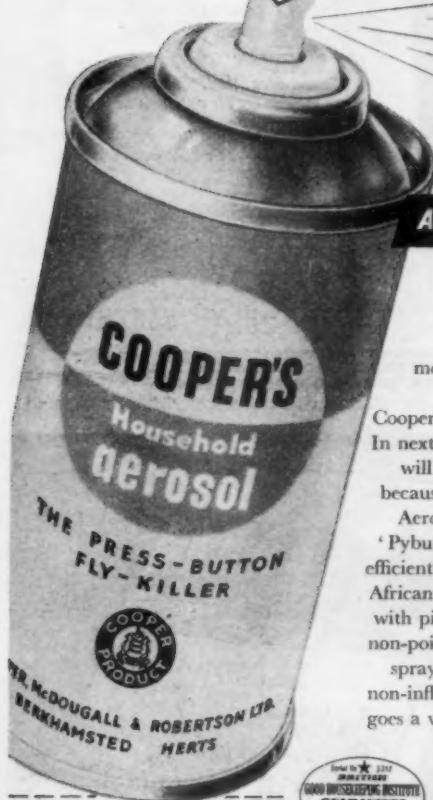
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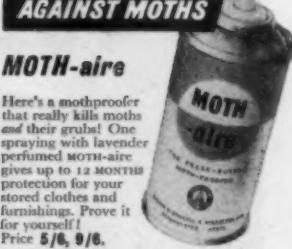
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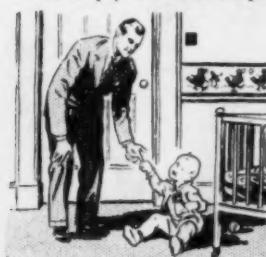
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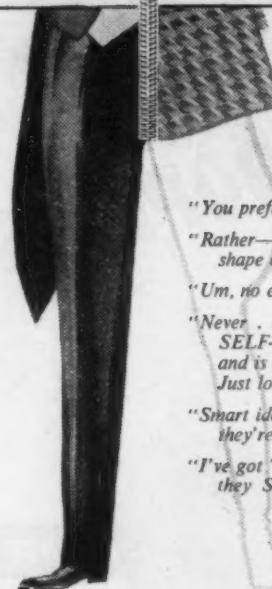
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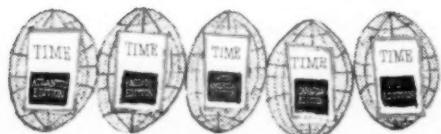
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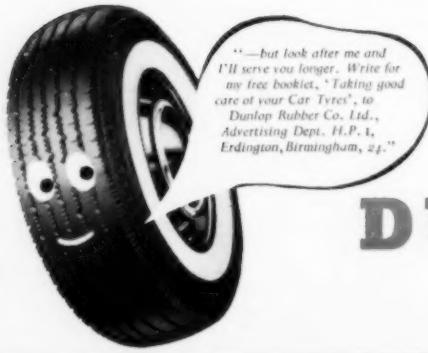
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